A TRANSLATION STUDIES CURRICULUM FOR MINISTRY LEADERS

A THESIS-PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF

GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMET OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

LISA HOOGEBOOM

JUNE 2017

CONTENTS

iv

ILLUSTRATIONS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CBMW: Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

CRC: Christian Reformed Church

CRCNA: Christian Reformed Church in North America

DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls

IRB: Institutional Review Board

KJV: King James Version

LXX: Septuagint

NASB: New American Standard Bible

NIrV: New International Reader's Version

NIV: New International Version

NKJV: New King James Version

NLT: New Living Translation

NT: New Testament

OT: Old Testament

PLO: Program Learning Outcome

RSV: Revised Standard Version

SLO: Student Learning Outcome

TNIV: Today's New International Version

ABSTRACT

This project entailed designing, implementing, and assessing a Translation Studies curriculum aimed at preparing students who are headed for various ministry settings to deal with issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation.

The goal of my project was to help the students improve their understanding of the complexities of the nature of the Bible (origins, infallibility issues, its reflection of the character of God, etc.) and the complexities of Bible translation (textual critical issues, linguistic theory, etc.) so that they can be better interpreters as well as good counselors to others about issues which have repeatedly become a source of divisiveness in the church. The project included setting Student Learning Outcomes that aligned with that aim as well as with those of Kuyper College, where this project was conducted. Readings, lectures, and other assignments were established to cover an eight-week curriculum. The effects of the curriculum on students' knowledge and attitudes towards the Bible and translation issues, as well as on students' preparedness to handle translation-related issues, was determined through analyzing four data sources.

The results led the author to conclude that the curriculum was highly successful in informing and equipping students to understand and thoughtfully engage issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation.

CHAPTER ONE:

EDUCATIONAL/MINISTRY SETTING AND PROBLEM

Introduction

The translation of the Bible into the languages of human speakers has built within it the potential for tension, drama, controversy, and staunch opinions. Taking the inspired and revered "Word of God" with its ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek signs, symbols, and sounds, and putting it into new signs, symbols, and sounds has often sparked controversy, even in centuries past. Jerome's Latin translation of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew, for example, was severely criticized by many, including Augustine, who vigorously opposed it; he feared it would further separate the Latin-speaking church from the Greek-speaking church, whose Old Testament was the much-revered Septuagint.[1] In the sixteenth century, William Tyndale's English translation of the Greek word *ekklesia* in the late 1520's as "congregation" instead of "church" was one of several controversial changes that caused an uproar in the Roman Catholic Church as it "denied the papacy its favourite proof-text"[2] in Matthew 16:18, with the effect that the "congregation" was built on the rock of Peter's leadership and testimony about Christ—not the "church." Tyndale was found guilty of heresy and died at the stake in 1536.[3]

While the fervor of opinion around Bible translation is a little less volatile than in Tyndale's era, the rate of speed at which Bible translations and updates are produced and

[1] Paul D. Wegner, *From Text to Translation: The origin and development of the Bible* (Grand Rapids:
[2] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002),164.
[3] Wegner, *From Text to Translation*, 287.

published over the last fifty-plus years gives the church plenty of opportunities to debate

translation issues. In the English-language world especially, new translations or updates

to translations come out so often that it can be difficult even for Bible teachers to keep up

with them. Add to that the newly-harnessed power of electronic dissemination over the

last two decades, plus the even more recent developments of exponential exposure to the

public through social media outlets, and the result is that church-goers and non-church-

goers alike are regularly presented with a bewildering array of translations, and their

social networks are inundated with strong opinions by a plethora of enthusiastic, self-

proclaimed experts touting the goods and the evils of a given Bible translation.

And so in the United States and elsewhere around the world, church leaders are

being asked a variety of questions from church members, or likely asking the questions

themselves: Which translation is right? Why are translations changing all the time,

anyway? Should I let my child read that comic-looking version of the Bible? And what in

the world are those Bible translators doing in their Bible translation among Muslim

groups? No doubt it is the respect and love that these folks have for the Bible that drives

the questions. And it is that same devout commitment that leads some to make

pronouncements about the wickedness of some translations, and the supremacy of

others—which has consequently led to numerous difficulties and conflicts in individual

churches as well as denominations. In fact back in 1997 when David Neff, editor at

Christianity Today, saw Bible translation issues tearing up the church, he used his

platform to plead for Christians to remain respectful in order to curb destructive clashes

that had begun to multiply between and among various church factions.[4] These clashes

---

[4] David Neff, "The Great Translation Debate: The divides over gender-inclusive Bibles hides what unites us," *Christianity Today* 41, no.12 (1997): 16-17.

have continued in the years since. In the opening pages of his book *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?,* published in 2013, author Dave Brunn again points to deep divisions among believing Christians that have surfaced because of differing perspectives on Bible translation.[5] Are church leaders prepared to address these issues with their colleagues in leadership and with church members? Are they able to discuss and explain the process of translation, and the philosophy behind various translations? Do they communicate, teach, and preach in a way that shows sensitivity and understanding of translation issues? Do they discuss these things in a way that does not drive away parishioners or cause divisions, more confusion, or even profound uncertainty in their churches? Too often that answer is no, as has been witnessed by the author and detailed below, and evidenced in the array of articles and public media attention to conflicts around Bible translation that are cited in this chapter.

So how can church leaders be better prepared to navigate the difficulties and complexities of Bible translation issues as they lead their churches in the 21st century? Through thoughtful, pointed, thorough education geared to inform about these issues, and geared to prepare leaders to understand and to assist church leadership and members in resolving conflicts that may arise in ministry. Seminaries, Bible schools, and other institutions could and should incorporate educational opportunities that encourage students and other participants to wrestle with significant, foundational questions on this topic: What is Bible translation? What is "translation"? What about the Bible allows it to be translated in the first place? Should Bible translation be evaluated in binary categories like "good" and "bad, "right" and "wrong," or "best" and "worst"? These

---

[5] Dave Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 19-20.

were the questions and issues driving the study and project implemented by the author, and detailed in this and the following chapters. As the Christian church attempts to heed the call of Jesus in John 17 to display unity to a world that is watching, it is essential that church leaders be given a sound base of knowledge and tools that will help them navigate issues of Bible translation with wisdom and sensitivity so that the church can continue to be a healthy as well as a unified witness. Because yes, another potential casualty amid the caustic rhetoric are the church attenders or onlookers who, dazed by the battles between various experts, church leaders, and lay people, wonder, "Can we ever really know what the Bible says?" and conclude, "No," so turn away from it, and from the church. These scenarios, issues, and questions were what fueled the education-oriented project implemented by the author at Kuyper College.

The Ministry Setting

The primary ministry setting of the author is that of teaching New Testament Greek at Kuyper College, a small, mid-western Christian college that has the following mission statement: "Kuyper College equips students with a biblical, Reformed worldview to serve effectively Christ's church and his world."[6] The College is located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and its birth in 1939 as Reformed Bible Institute can be traced back to several members of the Christian Reformed Church denomination in Illinois and Michigan who expressed the need for an evangelism-focused school designed to equip lay church leaders with training in Bible and missions from a Reformed perspective.[7]

---

[6] *Kuyper College Catalog* 2016-2017, 10.
[7] Ann Bauman and Paul Bremer, *Kuyper College: Celebrating 75 Years of Service, By God's Grace, For His Glory* (Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Company Publishers, 2014), 10-13.

The Institute became Reformed Bible College in 1971,[8] and was renamed again in 2006, this time after the theologian and statesman Abraham Kuyper.[9] The primary academic majors currently offered at Kuyper College continue the tradition of ministry preparation for students who plan to work in both church as well as non-church settings: Business Leadership, Intercultural Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, Music and Worship, Pre-seminary, Social Work, and Youth Ministry.[10] The College also awards Associate Degrees,[11] and offers a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages,[12] as well as Certificates in Biblical Studies, Christian Ministry, and Christian Foundations.[13] The College receives accreditation from both the Higher Learning Commission as well as the Association for Biblical Higher Education.[14]

Throughout its history, the stakeholders of the College have promoted a high view of the Bible. At the top of Kuyper College's *Core Value* list, in fact, is "Primacy of Scripture."[15] "Scripture" is also listed prominently in the College's *Statement of Faith*; it is elucidated in the assertion that follows: "We believe that the Old and New Testaments are the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God, our final authority in matters of doctrine and practice."[16] This high view of scripture at the College undoubtedly attracts students who hold a similar view. The faculty members, all of whom sign the statement of faith, also present a high view of scripture in their courses.

---

[8] Bauman and Bremer, *Celebrating 75 Years,* 68.
[9] Bauman and Bremer, *Celebrating 75 Years,* 123.
[10] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 52-96.
[11] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 97-100.
[12] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 66-67.
[13] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 101-102.
[14] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 11.
[15] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 6.
[16] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 7.

One of the distinctive features of Kuyper College, in fact, is its intense Bible and Theology core that is required for all bachelors-degree-seeking students. This series of classes is completed in addition to the students' obligatory general studies core, and alongside their program major courses. The mandatory classes in the Bible and Theology core include a two-semester sequence on the Old and New Testaments, two classes that cover the main doctrines of the church, a biblical interpretation class, a spiritual formation class, and a Christian worldview class. Elective options include classes on individual books or categories of books of the Bible, as well as focused topics in theology. The required core ranges from 21-30 credits, depending on the major of the student.[17]

Another noteworthy feature of Kuyper College is its emphasis on readiness for ministry praxis, a hallmark since its inception in 1939. The leadership at Kuyper College has long recognized that the students enrolled at the College are either current church leaders or the church leaders of tomorrow;[18] they are serving or will serve as missionaries, pastors, youth leaders, Sunday school teachers, elders, deacons, or hold any number of other leadership roles in the church, as well as in parachurch organizations. To that end, the College's official publications and statements are permeated with references to student readiness for leadership in various settings, including the church. This focus is seen in the College's core value of "Holistic Development," for example, which is explained as the desire "to form world-class citizens who are academically, spiritually, socially, and morally discerning, just, and merciful leaders in church and society."[19] The attention given to "praxis" as preparedness for service in a present-day setting is revealed

---

[17] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 10, 54.
[18] Bauman and Bremer, *Celebrating 75 Years*, 9.
[19] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 6.

6

in the following statement found in the College catalog: "All students gain practical

experience and skills needed to serve Christ in the 21ˢᵗ century."[20] The opening

paragraph of the catalog reveals that this praxis orientation has in fact been its long-

standing emphasis: "The College was founded as Reformed Bible Institute in 1939, with

a three-year curriculum that offered a practical, focused, and expedient track into foreign

and domestic missions."[21] The focus on preparation for service at the College is expressly

reflected in the hands-on opportunities for students, which include volunteering in the

community (embedded into a first-year class), a 3-credit intercultural immersion class

requirement, and program-specific internships that often take place in churches or in

para-church settings.[22] The opening section of the College's profile echoes this, as it

asserts that its mission is to be a Christian leadership college that "seeks to place

ministry-focused people in ministry and professional areas of leadership around the world

to meet the spiritual and social challenges that exist today."[23] That last phrase highlights

the emphasis on current issues, which is similarly highlighted in the College's core value

of **"**Biblical Worldview," affirming that Kuyper College's education "is conducted within

the framework of a biblical worldview from which students can assimilate, synthesize,

and respond to situations of life and learning."[24] Of particular note for this project is the

educational mandate to help students be acquainted with contemporary issues, which is

highlighted in Student Learning Outcome 2.3: [The student will] "Demonstrate

awareness of the variety of social, economic, religious, and cultural factors that affect

---

[20] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 10.
[21] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 8.
[22] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 10.
[23] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 8.
[24] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 6.

current local and global issues."[25] Thus the College-wide goals for students, while grounded in foundational head-knowledge and theory, also emphasize the applied learning to current issues that marry the theoretical with real-life situations. Educators at the College are aiming to challenge students to study and explore contemporary issues and potential ministry challenges—such as disputes occurring in the arena of Bible translation—so that they can be prepared for service in the church in an ever-changing global landscape.

Students at Kuyper College come primarily from Michigan and the Midwest, but many also come from farther away, including international settings.[26] While Kuyper College is historically connected to the Reformed tradition, and a majority of students represent that tradition, there are over twenty denominations represented in the student body, including Baptist, Bible Church, Congregational, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Methodist, Nazarene, Pentecostal, Wesleyan, and non-denominational, among others.[27] The small size of the College, the ministry-centered majors, and the Bible and Theology requirement bring the kind of cohesion and ministry focus among the student body that one might find in a seminary.

For the last ten years, one of the primary teaching areas of the author at Kuyper College has been the complete sequence of New Testament Greek language. Most students who enroll in Greek take a four-semester progression over two years, totaling 14 credits. Year one is an introduction to the alphabet, pronunciation, vocabulary, and foundational grammar. Homework includes daily Bible translation practice, where students begin to explore and experience both the messiness and the beauty of

---

[25] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 52.
[26] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 11.
[27] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 11.

communicating the biblical text through vast language and cultural differences. The curriculum of year two, prior to the changes made for this study, included translation of larger New Testament discourses, a review of genre and various interpretation principles, a short introduction to textual criticism, and a very brief discussion of English Bible translations. Additionally, in the fourth and final semester, the students pull various interpretation steps together in an intense study of one New Testament passage of their choice. Their final project portfolio includes their own translation of their chosen passage, an exegetical paper, and a sermon outline, as well as feedback on a required class presentation. The changes in curriculum that took place with the implementation of this project are explained briefly below, and more fully in chapter 4.

The students who take the Greek sequence represent a number of academic majors. The primary major is Pre-seminary, but over the last ten years a number of other majors have been represented as well, including Youth Ministry, Intercultural Studies, and Music and Worship. The Bible Translation minor that Kuyper College offers has also drawn a few students to the Greek sequence. Therefore some of the students who have taken the Greek sequence are going on to seminary for more ministry training, but many are not.

An additional ministry setting of this author includes membership on a committee appointed by the synod of Christian Reformed Church of North America (CRCNA), a denomination that comes out of the Dutch Reformed tradition, to assess translations for use in liturgy. The CRCNA is also the denomination that was most closely connected to the birth of Kuyper College in 1939.[28] This denomination is also closely associated with the birth of the New International Version (NIV), as it was the synod of the Christian

---

[28] Bauman and Bremer, *Celebrating 75 Years*, 9-11.

Reformed Church that approved the exploration of an updated English Bible translation back in the 1960's, and sought help from several evangelical scholars across many denominations; these efforts led to the NIV.[29] As someone born in the 1960's in Grand Rapids (where the CRCNA headquarters are located) and also a life-time member of the CRC denomination, the author witnessed firsthand the excitement as well as the apprehension about the "switch" from the RSV to the NIV for use in the church as well as in the local Christian schools back in the late 1970's to early 1980's. Because of this local history, interest in Bible translation issues has long been part of southwest Michigan's and the denomination's orbit, and discussions about Bible translation have continually been of interest to its members.

The Ministry Problem

Because of this involvement in discussions about Bible translations for the Christian Reformed Church, along with experience teaching Greek at both Kuyper College and the denomination's official seminary, Calvin Theological Seminary,[30] the author has frequently been asked to speak about Bible translation issues and to address questions and tensions in Grand Rapids area churches, as well as churches farther away where students have membership or maintain a leadership role. Those personal and professional interactions and encounters in southwest Michigan and beyond have revealed that lay church leaders and even many ordained pastors do not have substantive

---

[29] Chris Meehan, "NIV Translator Speaks of Finding The Right Words," October 13, 2015, https://www.crcna.org/news-and-views/niv-translator-speaks-finding-right-words, accessed October 3, 2016.

[30] Calvin Theological Seminary was founded in 1876 and functions under the auspices of the Christian Reformed Church. (More information can be found at http://www.calvinseminary.edu/about/.) The author began teaching the 2-semester sequence of introductory Greek for the Distance Learning Program in 2012.

knowledge about the differences in translations or approaches to translation, much less the ability to explain them to others. Some church leaders are therefore struggling to lead congregation members through sensitive issues in translation that have congregants concerned and/or have caused divisions in churches as well as in denominations.

An all-too-common stimulus of conflicts in the greater Grand Rapids area over the last several years are the varying opinions about the changes that have been made to the New International Version. The release of the NIV 2011 renewed apprehension about the controversial TNIV (Today's New International Version, 2002; more specifics on this below) in many area churches. In one local church setting, the mere discussion among the leadership about purchasing the NIV 2011 for the pews and using it in the worship service led to threats by some parishioners to leave that church. In another church setting, the leadership decided to forgo any version of the NIV, and, not without some controversy, declared the English Standard Version their official text and disposed of their NIV Bibles. In a third church setting, the anticipated switch from NIV 1984 to the NIV 2011 became so divisive, church leaders decided to delay any purchase of new Bibles for the pew, even though the NIV 1984 editions were in bad shape, and even though the young people were starting to use the NIV 2011 in their home and Christian school settings. A second common stimulus for local Bible translation consultations was confusion about the King James Version, sometimes due to the ubiquitous KJV enthusiast (in one setting, this was an elderly, retired pastor) trying to gain "converts," and other times from groups who were trying to find a version acceptable to all constituents involved. A third common stimulus for conflict around the topic of Bible translation was confusion about Bible translation work going on around the world, and

whether their church or individual congregants should continue to financially support

their missionaries who were participating in what appeared to be heretical, or at

minimum, controversial, Bible translation work in far-away places, often among

Muslims.

Of course, these anecdotes of tensions and difficulties around Bible translation

that come mainly from the Grand Rapids and western Michigan areas are a microcosm of

the tension and difficulties that are going on in the rest of United States, North America,

and other parts of the world. These tensions have regularly been reported by other

faculty and students at Kuyper College, many of whom come from other states or

countries. In the classroom, the topic of Bible translation disagreements inevitably brings

a whole host of comments, stories, and examples from nearby and abroad of how Bible

translation issues have caused division in the students' home settings. Predictably, these

tensions and difficulties have also been documented by numerous Christian media outlets

over the last twenty years and more in North America, with several of the biggest

conflicts broadcast more widely to the public through mainstream media.

One of the Bible translation conflicts that drew widespread media coverage was

the discussion around gender-inclusive language that was being utilized or at least under

consideration in various English Bible translation efforts. The negative banter reached

fever pitch in the spring of 1997, when the magazine *World* published several caustic

articles about the plans of the translation committee of the New International Version to

incorporate gender-inclusive language for an American audience in an updated NIV

version.[31] The coverage spawned a public outcry among some North American

---

[31] Susan Olasky, "The Feminist Seduction of the Evangelical Church: Femme Fatale," *World*, March 29, https://world.wng.org/1997/03/femme_fatale, accessed September 16, 2016.

evangelical groups against use of gender-inclusive language in the Bible. In fact, within weeks of this article's publication, several influential evangelical leaders, including James Dobson, John Piper, and Wayne Grudem, gathered to discuss and write up standards for gendered language in the Bible, now known as the Colorado Springs Guidelines, which they determined should be followed by translators.[32] *CBMW News*, a publication of the pro-complementarian, anti-egalitarian Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, then made the gendered language debate a front-page story in June, 1997.[33] *Christianity Today* ran several articles that reported on these debates as they unfolded; this included coverage of the initial response of some members of the International Bible Society to the outcry, which was to back away from its plan to fully incorporate gender-neutral language in its forthcoming translation efforts.[34] *Christianity Today* dedicated the entire October 27, 1997 issue to Bible translation issues, mostly focusing on the gender-inclusive language debate, with editor David Neff noting that many churches had removed the NIV from their pews, with some individuals even "desecrating Bibles by drilling holes in them and shipping them back to the supplier."[35] Neff urged "a friendly debate" rather than "demonization" which would only "delight the Devil and split the church."[36] The conflict brought attention beyond Christian publications; e.g., *The New York Times* picked up story.[37]

---

[32] "Can I Still Trust My Bible?" *Christianity Today* 41, no.12 (1997): 14-15.
[33] Wayne Grudem, "NIV Controversy: Participants Sign Landmark Agreement," *CBMW News*, June, 1997, http://cbmw.org/uncategorized/niv-controversy/, accessed September 16, 2016.
[34] Doug LeBlanc, "Hands Off My NIV!" *Christianity Today* 41, no.7 (1997): 52-53.
[35] David Neff, "The Great Translation Debate: The Divides Over Gender-Inclusive Bibles Hides What Unites Us," *Christianity Today* 41, no.12 (1997): 16.
[36] Neff, "The Great Translation Debate," 17.
[37] "Furor Kills Publication Of a Sex-Neutral Bible," The New York Times, May 29, 1997, http://www.nytimes.com/1997/05/29/us/furor-kills-publication-of-a-sex-neutral-bible.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FBible&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region

The gendered language debates have continued to make news headlines on a regular basis. For example, when gender-inclusive language was in fact incorporated into the Today's New International Version, the Southern Baptist Convention weighed in with a published judgment against gender-neutral renditions that declared that the TNIV was an unacceptable translation.[38] Major news outlets followed the story, e.g., *USA Today*, whose headline read, "Bible Changes Lead to a Holy War of Words."[39] The controversy became the cover story for *Christianity Today* in October of 2002, with Mark Strauss writing in support of the TNIV, and Vern S. Poythress writing against it.[40] Media coverage of the gendered language debate increased once again in the months before and after the release of the NIV's most recent update, the NIV 2011, a version that continued to use gender-neutral terms in its translation.[41] Not surprisingly, the Council on Biblical Womanhood and Manhood[42] as well as the Southern Baptist Convention again renewed its disapproval of the updated NIV,[43] although USA Today noted that the trustees at the Southern Baptist Convention's denominational publisher LifeWay deemed the NIV 2011 improved enough over the TNIV that it would sell it in their retail chain.[44] *The Christian*

=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=208&pgtype=collection, accessed October 16, 2016.

[38] Tom Strode, "SBC tackles immigration, NIV," *Baptist Press*, June 16, 2011, http://www.bpnews.net/35565, accessed September 16, 2016.

[39] Cathy Lynn Gronsmann, "Bible Changes Leads To A Holy War Of Words," *USA Today*, March 27, 2002, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/science/2002-03-27-bible-changes.htm, accessed October 8, 2016.

[40] Vern S. Poythress and Mark Strauss, "The TNIV Debate," *Christianity Today* 46 no. 11 (2002): 37-45.

[41] Meredith Jessup, "New Politically Correct Bible Translation Causes Stir With Conservative Christians," *The Blaze*, March 18, 2011, http://www.theblaze.com/stories/2011/03/18/new-politically-correct-bible-translation-causes-stir-with-conservative-christians/, accessed June 15, 2016.

[42] The Council on Biblical Womanhood and Manhood, "An Evaluation of Gender Language in the 2011 Edition of the NIV Bible," *CBMW*, June 6, 2011, http://bible-researcher.com/cbmw.niv2011, accessed September 30, 2016.

[43] Tom Strode, "SBC tackles immigration, NIV," *Baptist Press*, June 16, 2011, http://www.bpnews.net/35565/resolutions-sbc-tackles-immigration-niv, accessed September 16, 2016.

[44] Bob Smietana, "Major Provider Won't Won't Stop Selling Controversial Bible," *USA Today*, February 17, 2012, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/religion/story/2012-02-17/controversial-niv-bible-lifeway/53131628/1, accessed October 11, 2016.

Post reported that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod also rejected the NIV 2011 for liturgical use or for personal use, deeming that the inclusive language "creates the potential for minimizing the particularity of biblical revelation and, more seriously, at times undermines the saving revelation of Christ as the promised Savior of humankind."[45] As reactions mounted, the AP covered the controversy which was picked up by various media outlets, including CBS News.[46]

Another Bible translation topic that has garnered strong reactions and media coverage are the debates around how to translate familial terms in various Muslim contexts, including the translation of the word "Father" when it references God, or "Son of God" in reference to Jesus Christ. Even though these issues affect international Bible translation efforts, they have been widely discussed and publicized in North American circles also, since the financing of these efforts often comes from North American churches. *Christianity Today* made the "Son of God" translation debate their cover story in February of 2011, explaining for the general reader the difficulties experienced in an Islamic context when translating the phrase "Son of God;" Muslims deem the most basic rendering of this phrase to be blasphemy as it implies that Jesus' origin was a result of a sexual union between God and Mary. [47] The article describes how translators have tried to avoid miscommunication by using "beloved of God" or "Christ of God;" others add modifiers to the phrase "Son of God", such as "the beloved Son who comes from God" or "the spiritual Son of God."[48] In the midst of these tensions in 2012, the Presbyterian

---

[45] Audrey Barrick, "Lutherans Latest to Reject New NIV Bible Over Gender Language*," The Christian Post*, September 4, 2012, http://www.christianpost.com/news/lutherans-latest-to-reject-new-niv-bible-over-gender-language-81060/, accessed October 3, 2016.

[46] "Gender-neutral Bible Accused of Altering Message," March 18, 2011, *CBS News/ Associated Press*, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/gender-neutral-bible-accused-of-altering-message/, accessed June 15, 2016.

[47] Collin Hanson, "The Son and the Crescent," *Christianity Today* 55 no. 2 (2011): 19.

[48] Hanson, "The Son and the Crescent," 20-22.

Church of America recommended that its churches withdraw support and resources to any projects that were not compliant with its strict guidelines on translating familial terms.[49] The Assemblies of God (and their World Mission organization), a denomination of three million people, also threatened to withdraw support and sever ties with Bible translation organizations Wycliffe and SIL if the issues were not resolved to meet their standards.[50] The translation standards were eventually rewritten to the satisfaction of the Assemblies of God representatives, but in the interim, seven Bible translation projects were put on hold.[51]

Adding to the array of Bible translation discussions in the North American setting is the love affair with the King James Version (KJV) that continues to this day, as is represented in the anecdotes above, and substantiated by a Barna research study published in 2014 which revealed that 52% of Americans regularly read the King James Version or the New King James Version.[52] *Christianity Today* explored the story further and noted that only 11% of Americans reported reading the NIV, with other translations falling well behind even that.[53] While some KJV readers prefer it because of its familiarity or highly stylized language, many staunch KJV supporters say that of primary importance is their belief that newer versions meddle with the content of various books in

[49] Jeremy Weber, "Stop Supporting Wycliffe's Current Bible Translations for Muslims, PCA Advises Churches," *Christianity Today*, June 22, 2012, http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2012/june/stop-supporting-wycliffes-current-bible-translations-for.html, accessed September 16, 2016.

[50] Collin Hanson, "The Problem 'Son': Debate Continues Over Translating 'Son of God' for Muslims," *Christianity Today*, April 3, 2012, http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/april/problem-son.html, accessed September 16, 2016.

[51] Melissa Steffan, "Wycliffe No Longer Faces Boycott by 12,700 Churches," *Christianity Today*, June 13, 2013, http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2013/june/wycliffe-no-longer-faces-boycott-by-12700-churches.html, accessed September 16, 2016.

[52] Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra, "Most Popular and Fastest Growing Bible Translation Isn't What You Think It Is," *Christianity Today*, March 3, 2014, http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2014/march/most-popular-and-fastest-growing-bible-translation-niv-kjv.html, accessed September 30, 2016.

[53] Zylstra, "Most Popular and Fastest Growing Bible Translation."

the biblical text.[54] David Fuller is one KJV enthusiast who has made this argument,

insisting that Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, whose manuscripts underlie much

of the more recent, modern English translations, are inferior to the Majority text and

Byzantine manuscripts that underlie the KJV.[55] As evidence, he points to the comments

of John William Burgon (1813-1888) who noted that Vaticanus and Sinaiticus are in

excellent condition, and so being as old as they are, must have been rejected by the early

church who would have otherwise worn them out through reading or copying.[56] Fuller in

fact attributes the turn of biblical scholarship toward these other manuscripts to the work

of Satan, who has always "sought to corrupt or destroy that which God has caused to be

written."[57] This kind of unwavering support of the KJV and scathing criticism of other

translations still surfaces in churches, and raises questions among parishioners about the

validity of other English versions that are available at the bookstore or are utilized in

Bible study or Sunday School materials. James R. White contends that King James Only

enthusiasts can be "disruptive of church fellowship"[58] and their criticism of other

translations can lead to "schisms within the fellowship and a debilitation of the local

body."[59] The distrust of other English translations can be seen in Christian school

settings as well; in one local Christian school start-up, the only Bible version that was

able to gain approval from the various constituents involved, which included people from

Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant traditions, was the KJV.

---

[54] James R. White, *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust the Modern Translations?,*
(Bloomington: Bethany House Publishers, 2009, 2nd ed.), 14-15.
[55] David Otis Fuller, *Which Bible?* (Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International Publications/Kregel, 1975),
2-3, 7.
[56] Fuller, *Which Bible?,* 7.
[57] Fuller, *Which Bible?,* 5.
[58] White, *The King James Only Controversy,* 14.
[59] White, *The King James Only Controversy,* 15.

Caught up in these three as well as other national and international Bible translation debates are thousands of churchgoing folks and their leaders who are trying to make the right decisions and uphold the integrity of the Bible, but who often have little knowledge of the complex issues involved in translation. Surely the animated, heart-felt discussions and conflicts around Bible translations stem from Christians' love for the Bible. In various Protestant traditions, church members learn from youth that the Protestant movement was in large part about regular people getting access to the words of the Bible, and so hearing, reading, and studying the Bible in the home or in a Bible study group is considered a privilege not to be ignored. Many devoted Christians memorize parts of the Bible through participation in Sunday School or Bible clubs, and young and old alike carry theirs around with them or have their Bible app ready at a moment's notice. It is no wonder that perceived changes or alterations of traditional translations are viewed with caution or skepticism, as they worry that their holy book that undergirds their Christian faith is being downgraded in some way. Seeing the differences between versions or periodic changes in one version can be unsettling and cause fear that nothing is constant, not even the revered word of God. What many Christians do not realize, of course, is that translation is a complex endeavor, one that takes time and effort to accomplish, and one that takes time and effort to understand. Unfortunately, it is much easier for people to turn the worry and fear they are experiencing into open hostility against anything unfamiliar, or anyone who has a different viewpoint, rather than trying to learn about the natural complexities of translating the Bible.

Another dynamic to consider regarding the suspicious attitudes toward Bible translation among Christians in the American setting may be the insular nature of the

United States. The U.S. is an English-language-dominated country existing in an

English-language-dominated world. Fewer English-speaking Americans than ever are

learning second languages in a higher education setting.[60]   Except for Pre-seminary

students, Kuyper College does not require students to take a foreign language, either, and

does not offer any languages outside of Greek. (One caveat: The College offers a class

called Second Language Acquisition in which students begin to learn a new language of

their choice with a tutor.) In fact, a significant portion of the American students who have

studied Greek at the College in the last ten years have never studied another foreign

language because their high schools did not require it, either. The Canadian and

international students, by contrast, had generally studied at least one other language prior

to taking Greek at the College. And of course, even those English-speaking Americans

who do learn a foreign language rarely need to use that second language within the

United States, or even abroad, since English can be used in many settings around the

world. In other words, likely an extremely small number of American residents who have

grown up speaking only English have an experience-based understanding of translation,

because they are so seldom required to learn a second language, or so infrequently need

to actively translate from one language to another even if they have learned a second

language.

Layered on top of both this lack of experience dealing with the complexity of

communicating across language barriers in the American setting, as well as the passion

for the Bible across the spectrum of Christian traditions, is access to a bewildering array

---

[60] Roberto A. Ferdman, "Americans Are Beginning To Lose Their Love For Foreign Languages," The
Washington Post, February 19, 2015,
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/02/19/americans-are-beginning-to-lose-their-love-
for-foreign-languages/, accessed September 30, 2016.

of English translations of the Bible. Multitudes of English-language Bible translations are not only accessible to the general public—at people's fingertips in the local Christian bookstore or via the internet—but also being promoted and advertised by publishing companies as "new" or "the best." Biblical scholars are not immune to this hubris, as is noted by Gordon Fee who became conscious that his public disapproval of the very translation that many of his students were using put him in danger of disparaging the Bible itself.[61] In this sort of pressure cooker, it is no wonder that Bible translation discussions can so quickly become volatile. And likely this volatility is heightened by the various media outlets which continue to broadcast disagreements, strong opinions, and controversies in Bible translation which are easily accessible to the Christian public and rebroadcast via social media.

Given these factors in the American setting, but also similar ones around the world, parishioners are asking church leaders to weigh in on decisions about which translations will be used in their church or educational settings, to make judgments that will affect Bible translation efforts around the world, and to explain any number of other things related to translation. The following is a list of the topics and situations that have arisen at the grass-roots level which the author has observed in various ministry settings:

1) Individuals want to know about the differences between translations, e.g., the KJV versus a modern translation.

2) Individuals, a church council/board, or a Christian school wants the church leader's recommendation for a translation for personal use, for public worship, for published materials, or for school use, including memorization.

---

[61] Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Strauss. *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions*, 13.

3) Individuals want an explanation for why the footnotes in their Bible mention "older manuscripts."

4) Individuals want to understand why their favorite version keeps being changed.

5) Individuals express fear that Bible translators are capitulating to popular culture, e.g., with gender-neutral language.

6) A family threatens to leave the church if a certain translation is used in liturgy or is purchased for general use during the worship service.

7) Individuals want the church leader's opinion of non-conventional translations such as The Message, a graphic arts Bible, a video, etc.

8) A church council/board withholds money going out for international Bible translation due to a perceived bad/heretical translation, e.g., using "Allah" for God, or for alternatives for "Son of God" in various settings.

9) Individuals are confused or offended by biblical situations with reference to "wives," "slaves," "homosexuals," etc.

Again, this is a list of current discussions in limited geographical areas, and of course is not exhaustive; the hot topic in a particular denomination or segment of the church could potentially make this list much longer, as will the controversies of tomorrow that are for now unknown.

The Project and Research Overview

The title of this project is *Translation Studies for Ministry Leaders: Implementing Foundational Translation Principles in an Advanced New Testament Greek Curriculum.*

The research question is this: To what extent does the revised Kuyper College New Testament Greek language curriculum help inform and equip students to understand and thoughtfully engage the complex issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely occur in their ministry?

This project entailed designing and implementing a curriculum unit for Kuyper College students studying New Testament Greek which introduced foundational translation issues and translation theory, and then studying the effects of the curriculum on students' knowledge of Bible translation issues, attitudes towards the Bible and Bible translation, as well as students' self-perceptions of preparedness for handling these issues in ministry. The goal is to help men and women who are preparing for ministry to understand the complexities of the nature of the Bible and Bible translation so that they can be better prepared to counsel and educate church leaders and laity about translation issues which, while having the potential to edify the church body, have instead repeatedly become a source of divisiveness and discord in the church.

This curriculum unit on Bible Translation was implemented in the fourth-semester Greek class, so the students had been practicing New Testament translation themselves for over a year. The time dedicated to the Translation Studies curriculum was somewhat restricted, as multiple learning outcomes governed the course content for the semester. This introductory, time-limited approach was in fact supported by Esteban Voth, former academic dean at Bethel Seminary, and head of translation skills facilitation for the United Bible Societies' global mission team, who recommended in an interview that the unit not be packed so full of information that it would overwhelm the students.[62] His recommendation was to pick key topics from the discipline of Translation Studies, and to

---

[62] Interview with Esteban Voth, May 23, 2014, in Misano Adriatico, Italy.

22

introduce them gently and carefully. With those constraints as well as recommendations, the curriculum was developed into an eight-week curriculum, implemented during the fourth semester of Greek. Before the unit began, students had been translating and discussing discourses from Paul's letters, as well as translating sections of some of the other letters, and had also been working on their research projects which would climax in a presentation and sermon outline.

To aid in the College's mission to train future pastors, teachers, other church leaders, (and even Bible translators) broadly for ministry, the curriculum repeatedly incorporated fundamental refrains from the biblical-theological foundations for translation with the goal of helping students better grasp the big picture of God's desire to communicate with all people his message of grace, love, and salvation through the biblical text. These theological foundations are explained more fully in chapter 2, which presents a theology framework for translation and the translatability of scripture. A starting premise is that the nature of Scripture, from both the divine hand and the human hand (in forms and words that humans understand because written by humans), is meant to communicate, and is thus translatable into languages. Indeed, God is a communicator, and through the Bible he reveals himself and his desire for humanity and the world, which includes a relationship with humanity. Thus the Bible itself is the starting point for exploration of the value and usefulness of a translated Bible, as well as for establishing a foundation for translation principles.   Chapter 2 further explains that the biblical writers reveal that this communicative God chooses to connect to the world through the natural abilities of speakers (oral tradition) and writers (the written tradition) who use common language and other symbolic forms that would communicate to the listener/reader. The

framework also references the communicative act of Jesus Christ—who embodies the

word of God—as he was sent into the world.   It furthermore shows evidence of

translation within the Bible itself, and explores how the multicultural nature of the Bible

sets the expectation of an abundance of ways for the story to be told.

With that biblical-theological explanation as the foundational framework, the

curriculum is then structured around five areas of emphasis from the discipline of

Translation Studies and Bible Translation which are meant to help students understand

the scope and complexity of the translation task. The prevailing guide in choosing which

topics to cover in this unit was an article written by Roy E. Ciampa, which is more fully

discussed in chapter 3.[63] The five areas of emphasis are the following: the starting text,

approaches to and philosophy of translation, cognitive studies (including frame semantics

and relevance theory), discourse analysis, and ideological concerns. The limited study of

these five topics by no means makes the students translation experts, but gives them

enough breadth and also detail to be able to converse intelligently and thoughtfully about

translation matters. Another goal in covering these five topics is to help the students who

may have become comfortable with their own utilitarian translation method over the

previous year of Greek to wrestle with the complexity of the translation task. The study

of these various aspects of translation can help them realize that a multiplicity of

acceptable translation options is inevitable because of all the factors involved in the task

of translation, and would help cement the idea that binary assessment categories like

"good" versus "bad" are overly simplistic. The content of the curriculum unit—lecture

---

[63] Roy E. Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches to Bible Translation: Origins, Characteristics, and Issues," *A Bíblia e Suas Edições em Língua Portuguesa: 200° Aniversário da Primeira Edição Bíblica em Português da Sociedade Bíblica/1809-2009*. Lusófona Magazine of Science of Religions Monographic Series, 6. Lisbon: University Editions Lusófonas & Sociedade Bíblica, (2010): 59-101.

material, group discussion material, and the textbooks and articles for reading

homework—was developed using an array of resources from the arena of Bible

translation as well as that of general Translation Studies; these resources are discussed in

detail in chapter 3.

Along the way, the curriculum unit helps students consider how to address Bible

translation issues that arise in the church in a pastoral way, with the goal of promoting

unity and avoiding painful divisions over translation issues. In other words, pieces of the

curriculum force the students to consider how they might assure people they meet in their

ministry of the reliability of scripture—how they might assure those in the church

community who deeply desire to know what the biblical text "really says" that they can

indeed access the things that God is communicating, even in its translated forms. The

unit also reinforces to the student that they can trust that God reveals himself through the

variety of translations, and that they have an opportunity to exemplify that trust as they

exercise their various leadership roles.

This pastoral approach, according to Voth, must also be exemplified in the

classroom by the instructor. He stressed that teachers of these topics must gain the trust

of the students by demonstrating their commitment to the stability of the biblical text

before introducing them to ideas and theories that would challenge their assumptions. [64]

Thankfully in the Kuyper College setting, by the time students take fourth-semester

Greek they have established a close connection with each other, a close connection with

the professors in the Bible and Theology Department generally, and a close connection

with the Greek professor particularly, which reinforces the timing and placement of the

Translation Studies unit within the broader curriculum at Kuyper College.

---

[64] Personal interview with Esteban Voth, May 23, 2014, in Misano Adriatico, Italy.

This research project was evaluated and approved by Dr. Bryan Auday, research professor at Gordon College, as a non-experiment design; it was also approved to be conducted as either a one-group, after-only design—utilizing the assessment tools after the curriculum was implemented—or a one-group before/after design—utilizing part or all of the assessment tools both before and after the implementation of the curriculum with the students. The author was able to conduct the study using the latter alternative, as will be explicated in chapter 4. The research plan included use of three different assessment tools, both quantitative and qualitative, to track students' aptitudes around Bible translation approaches and theories, and also attitudes regarding Bible translation issues. The first kind of assessment tools used are the classic tools of education—assignments and tests, which were a source of qualitative data, from essay-type questions as well as translation. The second assessment tool is a before-and-after quantitative questionnaire-style survey utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. The third assessment tool is a focus group gathering, which is another qualitative option that gave students a forum to express the things they had learned as well as verbalize their self-assessment of readiness to handle Bible translation issues in the church. More details on the curriculum, on the Student Learning Outcomes, and the methods of assessing the outcomes are described in chapter 4. A final analysis of the assessment and conclusions about the research are detailed in chapter 5.

Conclusion

Kuyper College is equipping its students for leadership roles in the church, and the College's mission statement, vision documents, and student learning outcomes

encourage faculty to include curriculum components that help students, whether training to be a pastor, missionary, teacher, Bible translator, etc., to understand and explore contemporary issues in order to be prepared to address current needs in the church. The student body at Kuyper College is very aware of contemporary discussions about as well as conflicts around Bible translation that have occurred in southwest Michigan, in the United States, and around the world, since, not surprisingly, they have been affected by them, too. Like the well-meaning parishioners referred to above, these students love the Bible, and so changes or alterations of traditional translations are viewed with caution or skepticism. They have often seen first-hand that navigating Bible translation tensions and discussions in the church is a difficult task for church leaders, especially when those leaders have not been educated about the translation process. And, while seminaries may seem like a more suitable venue for this kind of training over undergraduate programs, many Kuyper College students headed for church leadership roles do not plan on attending seminary; in addition, curricula in seminaries do not necessarily incorporate these issues, even for those who do go on for further training.

One natural place to fit a curriculum unit on Translation Studies at Kuyper College is in the four-semester sequence of New Testament Greek language. Students begin translating the Bible in Greek 101 while in their second week of class. By their third and into their fourth semesters, they have reviewed Greek language structure and grammar issues, delved into the exegetical significance of various grammatical constructions, and considered how genre affects understanding. All along the way, students are required to translate the Bible as part of their homework, which is then reviewed as a group and discussed further in class. But even these students who are

studying and translating Greek on a regular basis have tended to have a mechanistic, rigid view of scripture, as well as a mechanistic, rigid view of language. Ten years of teaching have showed the author that most students struggle to move past "right" vs. "wrong" as their go-to assessment categories of translation. They cling to the familiar, and prefer a simple, mechanical approach to translation. As preeminent linguist, Bible translator, and teacher Eugene Nida noted, it takes a lot of time and training even for students headed into Bible translation work to move past their familiar-sounding, wooden translations since "they've grown up worshiping words more than worshiping God."[65] Getting students to comprehend the complexity of the Bible translation process from the inside out takes more than mere translation practice.

By fourth-semester Greek, students have certainly made a few steps on that journey away from a cut-paste mentality, but a crafted curriculum that walks students through the many things that need to be considered throughout the task of Bible translation will force the student to reconsider their own assumptions about the text and about what it means to translate it faithfully. Tackling these topics in a familiar cohort, led by a familiar professor, allows for a safe space to reevaluate assumptions about the biblical text, and to discuss openly the difficulties of the translation task. Helping students grasp the complexity of the task can help cement the idea that there are many worthy options and ways to accomplish that goal.

Helping students grasp the complexity of the translation task will also give them the kind of perspective that induces humility, and helps them avoid unnecessarily harsh criticism and disparaging remarks about Bible translations in their ministry settings which can lead to distrust of the Bible in general. Helping students grasp the beauty and

---

[65] David Neff, "Meaning-full Translations," *Christianity Today* 46 no. 11 (2002): 46.

effectiveness of a multitude of translation options will give them the confidence to assure

people in their ministry community who deeply desire to know what the biblical text

"really says" that they can know it, even in its translated forms. Reminding students of

the big picture—that God desires to communicate his message of love and salvation with

all people—will set them up with the perspective needed to maintain unity in the church

as a good witness to outsiders, to respond pastorally to people's questions about

translation, and to navigate with grace the conflicts around translation that may come up

in ministry.

CHAPTER 2:

A THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR BIBLE TRANSLATION

Introduction

As a teacher of Hellenistic Greek to Kuyper College students who are preparing

for leadership roles in the church, the author spends a lot of time helping students learn

how to read and understand words, phrases, and discourse in one language and context,

and communicate their meaning in another language and context. Students recognize the

importance of understanding and interpreting this most important book in the lives of

Christians—the Bible—and are eager to learn the Greek of the New Testament. One goal

of the newly revised curriculum is to help the students even more deeply understand the

remarkable nature of this Bible, including its translatability, and to explore various

complexities involved in the task of Bible translation. The aim in exploring the

complexity of the translation process is not to elevate the original-language text, but

rather the opposite: to support the idea that translations are important and that there is

inevitably a multitude of ways to approach and accomplish the translation task. Indeed,

the task is fundamental to the nature of the Bible. Yet, the students typically hold some

skepticism about translations, an attitude the author also witnesses regularly from local

church leaders who are seeking advice on dealing with church members' questions about

(or problems with) a translation. A phrase often heard among students and lay-people

alike goes something like this: "I would love to learn Hebrew and Greek so that I can

know what the Bible really says." They have a very high view of Scripture in its original

languages, and there is a longing to be able to read "the original" themselves in order to avoid the frustrations of an unwieldy, obtuse, or "wrong" translation.

Original-language texts are also highly valued in other religious contexts, and one of those is the Qur'an in a Muslim context. Comparing the views towards the translation of the Qur'an with that of the translation of the Bible has been a useful tool in conversations with church leaders and students because it establishes central discussion points. Just as the Bible is a highly valued holy book for Christians, the Qur'an is a highly valued holy book for Muslims and must be treated with utmost respect. In fact, Muslims believe that the words of the Qur'an are the direct message of God told to Muhammad in Arabic by Gabriel over the course of Muhammad's life. Over time, Muhammad recited these Arabic phrases and sentences to others, and eventually they were written down. Arabic, then, is considered the one sacred language for Muslims.[1] Because of this strong conviction about sacred language, the words of the Qur'an cannot truly be translated, and the more orthodox Islamic scholars have in fact contested various attempts at translation over the centuries.[2] Many Islamic scholars do recognize that some sort of transmission of meaning needs to happen in the many languages represented by adherents of Islam so that the message can be validated and spread around the world, so that an inquirer will in fact be able to find paraphrases of the Qur'an in hundreds of languages. However, these are referred to the "The Meaning of…" or some other softened title to make clear to the readers that they are not really the Qur'an. The only way to truly interact with the Qur'an and know what God said, then, is to learn 7th-century Arabic. Not surprisingly, many Muslim-dominated societies incorporate

---

[1] Francis Robinson, ed., *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World* (Cambridge Illustrated Histories) (Grand Rapids, MI: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 208-210.
[2] Samuel Zwemer, "Translations of the Koran", *Moslem World* (1915): 244-61.

memorization of the Qur'an in its original Arabic into their educational process, beginning with young children, since this is the one way they can know and understand what God has communicated in his holy book.[3]

The official stance of Islamic leaders on the status of a translation of their holy text is comparable to the unofficial stance of the beginner Greek students at Kuyper College and enthusiastic lay-folks who are sure that learning the original-language texts are the key to a clear understanding of the Bible. What brings these groups together are two shared ideas: first, a deep love of their holy text, and second, a realization that there is compromise in any and every translation. They may have never heard the Italian proverb "Every translator is a traitor," but they hold that same conviction. Thus, a close look at the Islamic viewpoint is a wonderful foil to consider questions like "Is the original-language text of the Bible the only version that can be considered the word of God? How legitimate is it to read and study a translated holy book? If we use a translation for study purposes, is it better to use one that is as word-for-word literal to the text as possible, or is a 'looser' translation OK?"

For these Bible-loving people, the best place to look for a defense of the idea that a translation of the biblical text is the word of God is within the Bible itself, where its listener/reader will find much to support the legitimacy and importance of translations of the Bible into the languages of the world. By looking at the content, themes, and even the writing and composition process of the books of the Bible themselves, the author will explore this translatability question below, with an eye especially to the Kuyper College students enrolled in Greek, for whom this and related issues are foundational for their

---

[3] Robinson, ed., *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*, 208-210.

life's vocation. This chapter will use the Christian Bible, then, as a starting point to

explore the translatability of the Bible and the value of a translated text for an audience

that venerates original-language texts. Below is an exploration of three biblical themes

that support the translatability of the holy text: 1) the communicative nature of this "word

of God" that also encompasses God's Trinitarian nature, 2) the evidence of translation

used within inspired Scripture itself, and 3) the theme of diversity that surfaces

throughout the Bible and climaxes in its closing scenes.

Considering "The Word of God"

A communicative, speaking God

First, the Bible demonstrates early on that the God of this holy book is a God who

desires to communicate. A reader of the Bible will find within its pages self-descriptions

of it being the "word" from God, (Deuteronomy 8:3, 2 Samuel 22:31, Psalm 119,

Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 4:12, *et al*.) which has led to the acceptance throughout history

to the idea that God is in fact communicating through it. Kevin Vanhoozer notes,

"It is hard to miss the recurring biblical theme that God wills to communicate and make

himself known: 'The word of the Lord came to…'; 'the Lord said…'"[4]   In her book

Scripture as Communication Jeannine Brown similarly writes,

> Christians have a long history of describing the Bible in language that
> evokes its communicative nature. When we speak of the Bible as the
> word of God, we are affirming that God speaks and that we should
> listen—we are using language of communication.[5]

---

[4] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion, and Authorship*, Cambridge
Studies in Christian Doctrine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), xvi.
[5] Jeannine K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI:
Baker Academic, 2007), 13.

Of course, this picture of God speaking is not exclusive to the Christian tradition. Nicholas Wolterstorff notes that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all revolve around an assumption that the God who is worshiped is a God who speaks.[6] Thus the traditions are similar in that they all espouse a God who attempts to communicate with his people.

The opening scene of the first book of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible gives the very first hint of this communicative, word-giving God in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Genesis 1:3 states, "God said, 'Let there be light.'"[7] In other words, the reader or listener sees that, as noted above by Vanhoozer and Brown, the God portrayed is a *speaking* God. Just a few verses later, at the climax of creation, God creates human beings, and declares that these humans have a special status, which is that they are created in the very image of this God (Genesis 1:27). However, neither of these "speaking" examples explicitly shows communication with human beings. It is in the following verse, Genesis 1:28, that the reader finds God speaking directly to people. In fact, while the author of Genesis has not portrayed God speaking directly to the light or the waters or the vegetation or even the creatures that have begun to occupy these environments, the author does portray him communicating verbally to the *people* he has created, immediately after creating them. God has created people in his image, and, as Basil Mitchel points out, since he made this "world of rational creatures able to love and worship him," it would be a notable gap if he "did not in any way communicate with them."[8] The author of Genesis is clearly highlighting God's speech to his human audience, Adam and Eve, so the hearer of these opening scenes in Genesis already has an indicator that this God is a communicating

---

[6] Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections On the Claim That God Speaks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), ix.
[7] All quotes from the Bible are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.
[8] Basil Mitchell, "Does Christianity Need a Revelation?" *Theology* 83 (1980), 108.

God—he desires to say something to people. The subject matter of his first talk with people? Instructions about the way to live a fruitful and blessed life. The readers also find God speaking directly to Adam in chapter 2, again giving instructions, this time about what to eat and what not to eat. Even after the act of disobedience against him found in Genesis 3, God seeks out communication with humans. He invites a response to the question, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:9). He then goes on to speak directly to the man, the woman, and the serpent (3:10-19).

This foundational motif of "God speaking directly to people" continues throughout the rest of the Old Testament and into the New. In the Pentateuch God is shown speaking to Noah about his plan to "put an end to all people" (Genesis 6:13), and about how he is to help fulfill those plans (Genesis 6-9). Abraham, too, receives direct instructions from God about where to move, as well as promises about his descendants (Genesis 12:1ff). Isaac hears directly from "the LORD" who appears to him to reiterate the promises made to Abraham (Genesis 26:2ff, 24), and years later God speaks to Jacob as well (Genesis 31:3, 35:1). The direct speaking of God to Moses begins in a dramatic way with the burning bush in the wilderness at Horeb (Exodus 3:4ff), and continues throughout Moses' life as God calls him to lead his people out of Egypt (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). The book of Joshua opens with God speaking directly to Joshua. Further along in the Old Testament drama, God speaks to Job (Job 38ff). A long list of prophets also hears directly from God: Isaiah (e.g., 1:20, 5:9, 8:1) Jeremiah (1:4), and Ezekiel (2:1ff) are just a few examples. And in the New Testament, God continues to speak. For example, in Matthew 3:17, after the baptism, a voice comes from heaven and says, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well-pleased." (See

also Mark 1:11 and Luke 3:22.) Peter, James, and John heard these same words, with the added imperative "Listen to him" at the transfiguration of Jesus (Mathew 17:1-5; Luke 9:28-36; Mark 9:2-13; 2 Peter 1:17).

Throughout the biblical text the reader predictably finds the people listed above, and many others, not just as recipients of God's words, but also taking on the role of "mediator" of God's words so that the words or message from God can go out to others. Angels, priests, prophets, and other mysterious figures are portrayed as "go-betweens," conveying various messages from God to another person or a group of people. Moses is perhaps the archetypal example of this, as he receives direct messages from God and then becomes very explicitly a mouthpiece for God to others (e.g., to Pharaoh as recorded in Exodus 5:23, 6:28; to Aaron in Exodus 8:16; to the community of Israel in Exodus 12:3, Exodus 19:25, Leviticus 19:2, etc.) Other prophets would follow in Moses' footsteps, as is explained in Deuteronomy 18:14-22—first Joshua, of course, but then others like Deborah (Judges 4), Nathan (2 Samuel 7), and all the other major and minor prophets who speak messages of both hope and judgment, often ending their teaching with the words "thus says the Lord. " Jonah, too, falls into this category. He receives a direct message from God to go to Nineveh—twice—and once there, he must "proclaim to it the message" which the Lord would give him (Jonah 1:1, 3:1-2). In the New Testament Gospels and Acts, angels appear at various times to convey a message from God, e.g., to Mary (Luke 2), and to Cornelius (Acts 10). Paul also considers himself a mediator of the word of God (2 Corinthians 2:17, 4:1ff). In the book of Hebrews, the author uses his opening remarks to highlight God's communication strategy throughout the centuries: "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various

ways…" The point of this list of examples: the God portrayed in the biblical text is a

message-giving God. He desires to communicate, and uses numerous means and

mediators to do so.

As mentioned above, these messages given directly from God to mediators were

not meant to cease with the immediate recipient(s), but to be brought to a new set of

recipients, and more often than not, a very large audience. Perhaps one of the biggest

tributes to the communicative nature of this God of the Bible is that the Old Testament

messages were intended to be communicated to thousands of people, first through oral

tradition, but eventually through the written word which continued to preserve the

message for the many future generations as well.[9] (See Psalm 78, Exodus 31:18,

Nehemiah 8, Luke 4.) Therefore, the "word of God" grew to encompass far more than

spoken things. Brown explains,

> The phrase 'word of God' occurs throughout the Bible, more often than
> not in reference to God's spoken word. Yet there are places where its
> occurrence broadens to include the written word as the record of what God
> has spoken (e.g., Matt. 15:6; Heb 4:12).[10]

This written word, then, includes not just the quotes from God, but the recorded history

that had been written down by Moses and other prophets and leaders of the Old

Testament communities. And all of this written material was understood to be God's

word to his people. The author of 2 Peter in chapter 1:19-21 writes,

> 19 We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable,
> and you will do well to pay attention to it, as a light shining in a dark
> place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20
> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of scripture came about
> by the prophet's own interpretation of things, 21 for prophecy never had

---

[9] John H. Walton and D Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2013), 21-23.
[10] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 13.

its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Paul's charge to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3 demonstrates a similar understanding about the written documents handed down from his ancestors:

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. 16: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Here, then, is evidence that the recorded messages, recorded history, and recorded songs are understood to be messages from God to guide people in the past as well as the present and into the future.

The biblical text thus reveals a God who deeply desires to commune with people. Brown writes,

So opening the Bible can be likened to entering into a communicative event. Or, to put it metaphorically, Scripture begins a conversation that is interpersonal and potentially life changing, because it is God who initiates the dialogues.[11]

And all of this dialogue and interaction gets written down so that the next generation will have the opportunity to read and hear. God was and is communicating to and through people across time through the spoken as well as the written word.

The pervasive theme throughout the biblical text of this God who desires to communicate with people lays a foundation for the importance of translation. The word

---

[11] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 13.

of God as written in the collected texts of the Old and New Testament is not able to go out to people if it remains in a language that the hearers or readers do not know.

The communication incarnate: Jesus as Word

The illustrations above have shown that God deeply desires to communicate, and that it comes to and through very earthy, ordinary people. The climax point of God's communication comes also in the very earthy form of the God-human around whom the biblical text revolves: Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament the reader finds God making a place for himself among the people of God in the tabernacle. He wants to be in communion with them, so he sends instructions for building this tent-like structure where he can be present with his people. Later the temple is constructed as a permanent such place. In the New Testament God is also found dwelling among his people, but this time, he comes as a human being. The Gospel of John and the letter of I John make the connection clear. John 1:14 states, "The Word became flesh, and made his dwelling among us." John is saying that God became incarnate in Jesus, and the title that is given to him here is "*logos*," the Word. Because God wants to be in communion with and communicate with people, he sends Jesus who takes on the communication role to perfection. God becomes a man with a real mouth and a literal voice, a God-man who has come to give the message of God's love and grace in an up-close and personal way. Darrell Bock explains,

> As Jesus revealed what God was doing, so also God was revealing what Jesus was doing, as well as who he was. John's fundamental thesis is that to see Jesus at work is to see revealed what the Father is doing. In their inseparability is found the revelation of God. Thus, Jesus can be described

39

in a very real sense as the 'Word' of God, for Jesus is the one sent by God to declare in deed and word what God is doing and what he asks of us.[12]

In other words, Jesus comes and embodies the word of God—God's message—through his life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Bock adds, "As the spoken word reveals the thoughts of the mind in tangible ways, so the Word expresses and reveals God in both word and act."[13] The author of Hebrews puts it this way:

> In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe (Hebrews 1:1-2ff).

God spoke through Jesus, and Jesus was the best messenger of all, better than the angels, and better than any prophet or priest (Hebrews 1-8). He became the mouthpiece of God, and in fact has replaced the tabernacle to become the very presence of God among the people (Hebrews 9).

So how does this help answer the questions about the value of and approach to translation? What is demonstrated here is that God is no longer content to communicate with his people from a distance, using prophets and spoken or written words. In Christ, God communicated in the most intimate of ways—in the flesh, coming as a baby, and going through day-to-day human life with all its temptations and griefs and trials. He became the Word himself.

The accounts of Jesus' entrance and life are now written down for subsequent generations, but the God-man was a real person who lived among human beings about

---

[12] Darrell L. Bock, *Jesus According to Scripture: Restoring the Portrait from the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1990), 407-408.
[13] Bock, *Jesus According to Scripture*, 411.

2,000 years ago. This is not a wooden word, spoken in a language that cannot be

translated. In the final verse of his prologue John writes, "No one has ever seen God, but

the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father,

has made him known." Reflecting on this verse, Bock writes, "The Word's oneness with

God and his identity with him is the answer. That one is able to explain (literally, 'to

exegete') and reveal what God is about."[14] Moreover, as John Frame notes, Jesus did

this with real words. "When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, he did not

merely stand somewhere so that people could look at him and absorb some silent

influence from him. Rather, he *taught*."[15] And so the life-giving God-man communicated

in a sensory-explosion, which must be proclaimed to the next generations, as explained in

I John 1:1-2:

> That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have
> seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have
> touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

This person-message became entangled in the everyday stuff of life. It was a

communication method of God that went well beyond the confines of language. Jesus'

life on earth, and his death and resurrection reveal the heart of the biblical message.

Indeed, "the Word became a human being" (John 1:14, NIrV) and revealed the glorious

grace and truth from the Father (John 1:17-18).

The Nature of the Word: "Understandable" Through the Work of the Holy Spirit

The claim that this God desires to communicate with people—a notion that arises

out of the text itself, and culminates in the person of Jesus Christ—lays a foundation, but

---

[14] Bock, *Jesus According to Scripture*, 416.

[15] John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2010), 42.

is not necessarily sufficient to defend the status of a translated text of the Bible as the very word of God. If we accept that the God of the Bible is a communicating God, though, we can argue that God's intention is for readers or listeners to hear and then to understand or comprehend the message so that the "dialogue" or communication is effective and personal. As Kevin DeYoung notes about the opening scenes in Genesis, "[God] comes to Adam with words, expecting the image-bearer to understand what he communicates…"[16] John Frame writes, "God speaks so that we can understand him and respond appropriately," and adds, "God's word, in all its qualities and aspects, is a personal communication from him to us."[17] An exploration of the importance of the recipients' understanding or comprehension of the biblical text comes from considering the following: the organic nature of the inspiration of the authors through the Holy Spirit—evident in the historical and multiple languages, genres, and literary elements of the biblical text—and the historical doctrine of the clarity or perspicuity of the text.

To lay a foundation it is helpful to consider the birth story and nature of the Christian biblical text, a story far more complex than that of the Qur'an. Jews and Christians understand that, over an extensive period, God communicated to and through many different people, who communicated to others through oral tradition; God also inspired various authors to eventually record his interactions with people in writing. Many different authors in a variety of contexts have written the books of the Bible over a period of hundreds of years. Some of these writings capture spoken words from the divine to the recipient(s) (see above), but more often the reader finds a record of the actions and movement of people in history. The writings are birthed as individual

[16] Kevin DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word: Why the Bible Is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What That Means for You and Me* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 66.
[17] Frame, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, 3.

missional or polemical treatises in that they are reacting to or responding to current

events even as they record past events, and are in this way presenting signposts to the

reading community of how to act or move forward in their current situation.[18] In other

words, the various books of the Bible are historically situated within very specific

contexts.

If readers accept what the Bible has to say about itself, they realize that the

written scriptures are a dual effort. Both the divine hand and the human hand are at work

to communicate the messages of God for the next generations—the divine God inspiring

the human hand through his Spirit to organically record the message of God through the

forms and languages and abilities of the authors. In 1958, the Reformed Ecumenical

Synod described the inspiration and birth of the biblical texts this way:

> This doctrine of inspiration, while holding that the human authors of
> Scripture were moved by the Holy Spirit so as to insure that what they
> wrote communicated infallibly God's self-revelation, also maintains that
> the Holy Spirit did not suppress their personalities, but rather that he
> sovereignly prepared, controlled and directed them in such a way that he
> utilized their endowments and experience, their research and reflection,
> their language and their style.[19]

A key point when considering the translatability of scripture, then, is to consider

the variety of ways and means that God used to communicate with people. What

becomes clear is that this holy book birth story is markedly different from that of the

Qur'an. The languages, genres, and literary techniques used by the writers come out of

their natural ability and the need to communicate in a way that hearers can understand—a

way that is pertinent to the audience. It turns out that God's communication style does

---

[18] John D. Currid, *Against the Gods: The Polemical Theology of the Old Testament* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 25, 31.
[19] Acts of Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1958, 55. http://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/positions

43

not rise above regular modes of communication, but in fact uses modes of communication pertinent to the time and culture. The writers, with their varied abilities, are using whatever language is appropriate for their audience, and in a form or genre or style that works for their context and is pertinent to what they are writing.[20]

First, a consideration of the languages. The written, original-language texts of the Bible were not written in a single, static "God-language" to be taught to the masses before the message could be understood. Rather, the authors used the language or dialect necessary to communicate to their audiences at that time in history. As Moises Silva states, "The biblical authors did not write in a mysterious or coded speech. Under inspiration, they used their daily language in a normal way."[21] The biblical text was written in three ancient languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek—with influences of other languages as well. The primary language of the Old Testament is Hebrew from the Iron Age, because this was the main language of the people of Israel when the oral traditions were written down.[22] In fact, according to scholars, Abraham did not speak Hebrew at all, but a precursor that would have been updated over time through the oral transmission process.[23] The Hebrew language of the written biblical text is not static, either, as later books reflect the influences of other languages that entered into the life and culture of the Jewish people. For example, Ezra-Nehemiah and Daniel reflect a later date by the inclusion of words borrowed from places that were exerting their influence

---

[20] Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 16-18.
[21] Moises Silva, "Using and Abusing Language" in *Rightly Divided, Readings in Biblical Hermeneutics*, ed. Roy B. Zuck (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996), 91.
[22] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 32.
[23] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 32.

over them.[24] The use of the Aramaic language, which had become the lingua franca of the region by the time the events in these books were recorded, is the most prominent example. The people of God had learned Aramaic after the Assyrians and Babylonians had conquered the lands of Israel and brought many of its inhabitants into captivity, and so biblical authors utilized this common language in Ezra 4:8-6:18, Ezra 7:12-26, and Daniel 2:4b-7:28. The exact reason why the book of Daniel vacillates between Hebrew and Aramaic is still debated, but one theory is that the author is using Aramaic as a rhetorical tool to evoke certain emotions among the audience in this particular section about the nations.[25] Whatever the case, the author has used whatever languages are at his disposal for the purposes of good communication to the intended audience(s). This included a handful of Indo-European and Babylonian words that can be found within the Aramaic sections of both Ezra and Daniel; the Aramaic parts of Daniel even include a few Greek words.[26]

Since Aramaic had become the heart-language of the Jews by the Second-Temple era, bits of it show up again in the New Testament amid the third main language of the Bible, Greek. Koine Greek had become the *lingua franca* of the entire Mediterranean world by this time due to the Hellenization of the area which had begun in the 4th century B.C.[27] The Gospels and letters were being sent out throughout this region, and since Koine Greek was the language everyone had in common, the authors used it for the

---

[24] F. Charles Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 21-23.
[25] Anathea Portier-Young, "Languages of Identity and Obligation", *Vetus Testamentum* 60, no. 1 (2010): 98-115.
[26] Robert Wilson, "Foreign Words in the Old Testament as Evidence of Historicity", *Princeton Theological Review* 26, no.2 (1928): 177-247.
[27] Timothy Michael Law, *When God Spoke Greek: the Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 99.

broadest means of communication. As Mark Strauss puts it, "It is the Greek of the street."[28]

The point here is that the authors and scribes who wrote and preserved the text were comfortable with "new" languages for their writings, because what was of primary importance to the authors was that their language usage be understandable to their audiences. Multiple languages were used so that good communication could occur between the authors and recipients who were living in varied contexts across hundreds of years. The God of the Bible communicates in whatever language is necessary for the job.

Similarly, the authors used the forms or genre that worked for their context and was pertinent to what they are writing—even the euphemisms and colloquialisms that were familiar to them and to their recipients. They wrote their messages using these certain forms so that the people on the other end could grasp the context and meaning— so that people could "get" what it was they were trying to say. Brown puts it this way: "One of the primary communicative choices that authors make is their choice of genres"[29] and in fact, "By paying attention to the genre choice made by an author, we will be in a better position to understand that author's communication."[30] Fee adds:

> In order to communicate his Word to all human conditions, God chose to use almost every available kind of communication: narrative history, genealogies, chronicles, laws of all kinds, proverbs, prophetic oracles, riddles, drama, biographical sketches, parables, letters, sermons, apocalypses.[31]

---

[28] Mark L. Strauss, *Distorting Scripture?: The Challenge of Bible Translation and Gender Accuracy* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishing) 94.
[29] Brown*, Scripture as Communication*, 140.
[30] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 140.
[31] Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 22.

Fee is hinting at God's desire to communicate to the variety of readers or listeners by the sheer variety of genres and literary categories utilized in the biblical text. God is so intent on communication that he employed multiple modes of addressing people and their situations—modes that were familiar to the original audiences.

Another biblical theme related to the organic nature of the communication of the Bible that also supports the premise that the Bible must be understandable is the doctrine of the clarity or perspicuity of the Bible. Even for those who accept the self-identity of the biblical text and believe it is a holy book orchestrated by God to reveal a message for people, the Bible may seem an intimidating book to study, perhaps even because of what was noted above: it comes through multiple authors in a host of contexts, through a variety of genres, and in three ancient languages. However, the biblical text has been shown time and time again to reveal a clear, accessible message for the community of believers, so that it becomes like a "lamp" to our feet (Psalm 119:105), a "light shining in a dark place" (2 Peter 1:19), and "useful" to followers of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17) who gather as a community to listen and learn (Nehemiah 8, Luke 5:1, Acts 17:10-12). This notion of perspicuity or clarity of the Bible is explained below by Kevin Vanhoozer who seeks to caution abusers of the term. He writes,

> It is important to note what the clarity of Scripture does not mean. It does not mean, first of all, that interpretation is unnecessary –the biblical meaning will be delivered up by some mystical process of hermeneutical osmosis. Nor does it mean that an autonomous individual can, by employing critical techniques alone, wrest the meaning from the text. Rather, clarity means that the Bible is sufficiently unambiguous in the main for any well-intentioned person with Christian faith to interpret each part with relative adequacy.[32]

---

[32] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Landmarks in Christian Scholarship), (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 315.

In other words, the word of God is not so opaque and inaccessible that only a few people can understand it. And while this "perspicuity of Scripture" doctrine may at first glance seem an improbable one, it has been recognized that it stands not on the strength of human ability alone, but on the work of the Holy Spirit, who "illuminates the revelation of God to human beings"[33] (cf. I Corinthians 2:10-16). The Bible is for everyone—meant for all kinds of people who are able to grasp the general message. DeYoung writes about it this way:

> The doctrine of the clarity of Scripture is not a wild assertion that the meaning of every verse in the Bible will be patently obvious to everyone. Rather, the perspicuity of Scripture upholds the notion that ordinary people using ordinary means can accurately understand enough of what must be known, believed, and observed for them to be faithful Christians."[34]

One of the keys when considering the clarity and understandability of Scripture is the adequacy and trustworthiness of language. According to Genesis 1, human beings are created by God and embedded in a created order, and the language of human beings is also part of the good, created order (not intended to become "the determining, absolutizing force"[35] that makes everything a linguistic construct), designed for reliability and trustworthiness and thus "adequate for the task of communication and theology."[36] Brown writes, "The promise of Scripture as revelation is that God has revealed truth through the finitude and adequacy of human language."[37] God created language and pronounced it "good." As Brown points out, it was tainted by the fall and is an imperfect

---

[33] Michael F. Bird, *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 631.
[34] DeYoung, *Taking God At His Word*, 59.
[35] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 169
[36] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 170.
[37] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 171.

vehicle of communication, "yet God in great wisdom chose to use human language as a vehicle of his perfect truth" in Scripture, which we must accept as one of the mysteries of faith.[38]

Another of the keys when considering the clarity of Scripture is the role of "story." While a huge variety of genres and literary devices are used across the sixty-six books of the Protestant Bible, a sizable portion of the biblical text is in fact a narrative history of the actions and movements of the people of Israel so that a story unfolds from beginning to end. Thus, the universal "story" genre—not a series of propositions—is the backbone of the biblical text. In the Old Testament, over 40% of the writing is narrative,[39] and stories dominate the New Testament Gospels and Acts as well, which then get fleshed out by the commentary found in the rest of the New Testament books. While the narrative in the Old Testament text is undoubtedly illustrative in that its overarching thread points to Christ, Douglas Stuart points out that the overarching biblical narrative, based in history, is at its core neither allegorical nor moralistic.[40] In other words, the narrative of the Bible is quite accessible to the hearer, and reveals the Bible's central message, one that, as Brown points out, is "primarily about God and God's redemptive activity among humanity."[41] Indeed, the Old Testament unveils a dynamic plot that is then picked up in the New Testament Gospels in which readers find various accounts of the life of Jesus, the person who completes and fulfills the greatest story ever told—a story accessible to all.

---

[38] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 188.
[39] Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 89.
[40] Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 92.
[41] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 162.

In various ministry contexts over the years, which include working with Muslim believers and unbelievers, with children and youth, with college students, and with intellectually challenged individuals, the author has seen the truth of perspicuity in action. Yes, many parts of the Bible are confusing, and members of the believing community must work together in interpreting and understanding the Bible. But, through the work of the Holy Spirit, the overall message is clear even to a grown person whose mental age is that of a young toddler, as witnessed first-hand from working through a Bible story curriculum for one year with a forty-year-old woman who fit this category. *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (1.7) rings true to this experience. It says,

> All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all (2 Pet. 3:16); yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them (Ps. 119:105, 130).[42]

The core message of the Bible comes through loud and clear in the translation, especially in the story-telling, and listeners of all kinds and with all ability levels respond to it. For the mentally disabled woman mentioned above, it was a response of joy every week as she heard the reading of various stories, Psalms and teachings of the Bible.

This foray into the nature of the Bible helps build the case for the high value of its translations. God, through his Holy Spirit, has used multiple means to make the Bible understandable to people. The Bible is a set of books written over a long period of history, put down in ink at the hands of humans for specific audiences, but divinely inspired because God desires to reveal himself through them. He used authors with their natural abilities, and he used various languages and forms that were meaningful to the

---

[42] *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter 1, part VII. http://www.reformed.org/documents.

audiences. The overarching narrative of these books resonates across cultures because "story" is common to all, and the narrative gets enhanced through other genres like song, poetry, and letter. While it is certainly not an easy task to understand and to interpret many parts of the biblical text, God sent his Spirit to illuminate the message and make it accessible to the community of believers. This clearly supported goal of "understandability," then, assumes and even demands a translated biblical text. The intellectually disabled woman, mentioned above, who rejoiced in the Bible stories, cannot do so apart from an English translation—one geared for a child. The esteemed seminary professor who became a believer after reading a Gideon Bible on board a submarine could not have responded without that English translation. The testimony of a Muslim friend from Egypt, who began following Christ after interacting with Christian friends and reading an Arabic Bible, confirms the idea that God is communicating in the Bible in a way that is understandable—but of course, only when it has been translated into a language that is understandable to the reader.

This section explored the biblical theme of the "Word of God," which, it turns out, is also a Trinitarian theme. According to Frame this should not be surprising, since "God is a being who in his very nature is communicative. He speaks not only to creatures, but within his Trinitarian existence, Father to Son, Son to Father, both to the Spirit, and the Spirit to both of them."[43] God's Spirit was present when God "spoke" creation into being (Genesis 1), and Jesus, called the Word of God himself (John 1), referred to his own words as "full of Spirit" (John 6:63). Jesus also taught that when the Spirit comes, the Spirit "will speak" the things of the Father and the Son (John 16: 13-15). God in his fullness, and at his essence, is a God who communicates. This

---

[43] Frame, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, 42.

discussion has opened the door still further to a high view of the translated biblical text, which entails putting the text in a regular mode of communication for the hearer, so that the hearer can understand and respond to it.

Evidence of Translation Within the Bible

While the section above helped lay a foundation for translation, this chapter has still not fully answered the fundamental question, "How can a translation of the Bible hold the same 'word of God' status as the original texts?" Perhaps the most obvious support of a high view of translation comes from the fact that readers find translation within the biblical text itself.

Translation is highlighted within the text

First of all, examples of translation occur right in the text as authors explain words that would be foreign to some or all of the recipients. For example, in Mark 5:41, the author records Jesus speaking to Jairus's daughter in Aramaic—"*Talitha koum*"— with the translation of it immediately following in Greek. (The English translation: "Little girl, I say to you, get up!) Mark 7:34 records the Aramaic word "*Ephphatha!*" which Jesus speaks when he heals a deaf and mute man, followed by its translated meaning. Jesus' words from the cross, "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani*" are also translated into Greek for the readers in Mark 15:34. These translations and others like it highlight the historic nature of the events, and also show that the writers are desiring to give more than one language version of the same events.

The original text is a result of translation

Second, and closely related to the first point, is that much of what we read as "original language" has already been translated from another language. As mentioned above, scholars have demonstrated that Abraham did not speak Hebrew at all, but a precursor which would have been updated—that is, translated—over hundreds of years through the oral transmission process and would reflect naturally-occurring language changes.[44] Historical studies also make it clear that Jesus' and his disciples' heart language was Aramaic,[45] and much of his ministry would also have been conducted in Aramaic in order for him to communicate with his hometown crowds. Therefore the statements that were recorded in the Gospels as Jesus' or the disciples' words have been translated into Greek from Aramaic for the Greek-speaking recipients. Yes, Jesus likely learned Greek and probably used it on various occasions (like when traveling around and ministering in the Decapolis area, etc.), but in most locations he would be speaking and teaching in Aramaic.[46] Interestingly, the writers of the Gospels did not hold back from quoting Jesus directly. They took the teachings and sayings of Jesus and wrote them down into the words, form and grammar of Koine Greek. The writers of the Gospels were in fact doing translation work as they wrote down these teachings of and interactions with Jesus.

So it turns out that the well-meaning students and others who are desperate to know what Jesus "really said" by reading the original Greek are not reading the original words of Jesus at all, except perhaps in the Aramaic examples noted above. They are

---

[44] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 32.
[45] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 99.
[46] See chapter 9, "Septuagint and New Testament" in Karen Jobes and Moises Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 183-205.

instead reading a trustworthy translation of the things that Jesus said. This is a huge

boost for a high view of translation. The message conveyed in the Old Testament and the

New Testament is a true and powerful one, no matter what language is used. And the

authors, inspired by God, were confident that they were faithfully communicating the

message in the translated words.

The New Testament writers use a translated text

Third and finally, careful study of the New Testament texts reveals that

translations of the Old Testament texts are held up as the word of God by authors in the

New Testament. The Greek Septuagint versions of various Old Testament books had

been widely circulated by the time of Jesus' birth, and these Greek translations are what

readers find throughout the New Testament Greek texts even more often than the

Hebrew-backed translations.[47] For example, in Luke 4:18-19, Jesus is handed he scroll in

the Nazareth synagogue and he reads this from Isaiah 61:

> The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
> Because he has anointed me
> To proclaim good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
> And recovery of sight for the blind,
> To set the oppressed free,
> To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

The content of the line "And recovery of the sight for the blind" is clearly supported by

the Greek Septuagint versions as opposed to the Hebrew reading which is "opening of the

---

[47] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 183-205.

54

prison to those who are bound."[48] Whether Jesus really quoted Septuagint versions here

and elsewhere is questionable, since Jesus was not likely to read Greek in these home-

region, Aramaic-speaking contexts. But the point is, Luke and the other Gospel writers

were unafraid to insert a Greek translation and present it as the word of God. Paul and

other writers also quote Septuagint versions in multiple places (e.g., Hebrews 10:5-7).

The Septuagint version of the Old Testament was therefore clearly considered the word

of God for the Greek-speaking Jews and other God-fearers, and the authors of the New

Testament as well. Whatever the source of the Old Testament references, the authors of

the New Testament text were not afraid to translate them into Greek, revealing that they

were comfortable with the notion that the communication of God's word could happen

through translation into other languages.

All Nations: Diversity of People and Languages in the Bible

If the Bible could be compared to a multi-colored tapestry, the theme of diversity

of people and language would be the gold thread that runs from one end to the other, with

the gold becoming more prominent as it reaches its finale. In Genesis 11, the tower of

Babel incident is about God using language-diversity as a scattering agent for a

centralized, power-grabbing people out to glorify themselves. Then in Genesis 12:1-3,

God tells Abraham that his blessing will go out through his descendants to all peoples of

the world—in a way, bringing a picture of a diverse people back together, but this time

around the blessing of God.   The Old Testament goes on to highlight people from other

nations who join the story along the way: Tamar in Genesis 38, Rahab in the book of

---

[48] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 194.

Joshua, Naomi and Ruth in the book of Ruth, Naaman in 2 Kings, and the Ninevites in Jonah, to name a few.

In the New Testament, interaction with people from other places and languages happens already around the birth of the Christ-child, with the visit from the Magi (Matthew 2), as well in the trip to Egypt with the young family (Matthew 2). It continues with Jesus' interaction with the foreign Roman centurion who seeks healing for his servant (Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10), and the visits by Jesus to the regions outside of Galilee (Mark 7:24ff, Matthew 15:21ff). The geography and languages become ever-broader when considering the many places Paul and others travel to in Acts. Perhaps the strongest thematic connection in the New Testament to the Old Testament Babel story comes with the language diversity seen in the Pentecost event as recorded in Acts 2. In this account, God sends his Holy Spirit to again bring about a diversity of language abilities which, like the Babel story, could be seen as a scattering agent, but this time it would enable his followers to bring the glorious message of the kingdom—redemption and reconciliation—to all the people-groups represented by those languages. God wants multiplicity of language because he desires to be in relationship with many, as is made clear in Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 24:45-48, and Acts 1:8.

God clearly intended for a rich diversity of people in his community of believers. Readers of Revelation find this diversity fully pictured in several places (5:9, 7:9, et.al.) with people circling the throne and singing a new song about God procuring people who have come from every "tribe and language and people and nation" with the purchasing power of the Lamb's blood. The beautiful truth is that, from the beginning, God has allowed and blessed and even orchestrated a translated text—a text for the all the

people—so that people from every tribe and tongue could hear his message and commune with him always.

Conclusion

Theologians and students of the Bible throughout history have recognized that the Bible represents a communicative God. The Bible is an intentional record of communication from the divine God to people, and throughout, the readers/listeners understand that God desires to be in relationship with people from every language and background, all of whom he has created in his image. The picture from the beginning is one of God walking with the people he has created, and the readers find that this God has stooped to the level of speaking with them as well. Perhaps even more shockingly, even after they have shown their disloyalty, God still comes to them to talk. He is a communicator—a revealer. God reveals himself and his desire for humanity and the world, which includes a relationship with humanity.

God's Old Testament interaction with his people is the pre-enactment of what would come in the ultimate message and messenger, Jesus Christ, the Word of God made flesh. Through the person of Christ, and the writings of the biblical authors who— through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit— utilize a variety of languages, genres, and even translations of holy texts themselves to meet audience need, God communicates a clear message of redemption, reconciliation, and new life. The reader finds that the biblical text is a communicative one, divinely inspired, yet written in forms and words that humans understand, because humans were part and parcel of the communication process. In other words, the Bible has always been meant to be understood, and thus

demands to be translated into languages and forms that people understand. Without translation, it cannot be communicated in the way it was intended.

The "birth stories" of the Bible and the Qur'an and the openness to translatability in their respective traditions are likely related. The Qur'an is a record of recitation, given and recorded in Arabic only. The Bible was authored by many writers in various languages and contexts utilizing many genres, especially historical narrative, and is destined for translation. Samuel Zwemer, a Christian scholar of Islam in the early 20th century, reflected often on the translatability of the Bible as compared to the Qur'an. He observes that the Bible uses common images, yet reaches the deepest need. He notes, "The Bible, in contrast to the Koran, has this unique quality, that it can be rendered into all the languages of mankind without losing its majesty, beauty, and spiritual power. The secret lies in the subject matter of the Scriptures."[49]

The Bible is the story of God's faithfulness to his people. Because God organically inspired the authors, the communication happens in common ways and in common languages. There is not one "sacred" language; all languages are God's languages.

In helping train future pastors and teachers and possible translators for ministry, the author seeks to establish a solid biblical-theological foundation for translation that can help them better grasp God's desire to communicate his message of love and salvation with all people. The goal is for them to be able to assure people in their ministry community who deeply desire to know what the biblical text "really says" that they can know it, even in its translated form. And so the Bible has been translated into hundreds

---

[49] Samuel Zwemer, "Translations of the Koran", *Moslem World* (1915): 244-61.

and even thousands of languages with the understanding that the readers will only then

hear, understand, and be convicted by its stories, poetry, and teaching. And these

translations are considered the word of God. God is able to communicate to the reader

through the words of the Bible, no matter the language.

CHAPTER 3:

REVIEW OF TRANSLATION STUDIES LITERATURE

Introduction

   This chapter contains overviews of both older and current texts that establish and explain the multiple topics that the author will cover in the "Translation Studies" curriculum which is a unit within the Kuyper College students' fourth semester of their New Testament Greek sequence. The first section compares and assesses three articles and two books that give an overview of Translation Studies for different audiences, and will thus help establish a baseline for the development of the curriculum content. Roy Ciampa's article "Contemporary Approaches to Bible Translation: Origins, Characteristics, and Issues"[1] is a key piece of this first section, and themes and topics from two other articles plus two books will be briefly summarized and compared to Ciampa's primary themes with the purpose of establishing a sound framework for the "Translation Studies" unit at Kuyper College. The second section explores books and articles that will help in assembling content for class lectures, as well as in-class exercises or assignments for students. This is the largest section, and is outlined according to the main sub-categories of Translation Studies established in Section I. The books or articles that contain pertinent information for more than one of the curriculum topics are referenced under each of those curriculum topics. The third and final section references

---

[1] Roy E. Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches to Bible Translation: Origins, Characteristics, and Issues," *A Bíblia e Suas Edições em Língua Portuguesa: 200° Aniversário da Primeira Edição Bíblica em Português da Sociedade Bíblica/1809-2009*. Lusófona Magazine of Science of Religions Monographic Series, 6. Lisbon: University Editions Lusófonas & Sociedade Bíblica, (2010): 59-101.

the books and one article that are under consideration as assigned readings for students

with an explanation of how each one fits into the curriculum.

Establishing Subtopics for the Translation Studies Undergraduate Curriculum

In the article "Contemporary Approaches to Bible Translation: Origins,

Characteristics, and Issues," Roy E. Ciampa gives a big-picture overview of the

development of translation studies over the last several decades, and then discusses how

these developments have intersected with the various translations of the Bible into

Portuguese. Because Ciampa is writing for those who may have little knowledge of what

is involved in translation, this article is the perfect guide in the development of

Translation Studies topics for an introductory undergraduate unit of study on Bible

translation.

Ciampa covers the numerous variables involved in producing a Bible translation:

recent views about which books get translated first, decisions about the starting text (e.g.,

the eclectic text versus the Byzantine Majority text, or the influence of Septuagint), and

the medium or form of the translation;[2] other variables include paratextual and

extratextual choices,[3] the decisions about the intended audience and purpose or *skopos* of

the text which will affect, e.g., whether translators are working toward dynamic (or

functional equivalence) versus a word-for-word (or formal) translation,[4] the important

lessons from cognitive linguistics/frame semantics,[5] the importance of relevance theory

---

[2] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 62-63.
[3] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 63-66.
[4] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 66-73.
[5] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 73-74.

for communication,[6] the level of weight put on literary form or style,[7] the application of textlinguistics or discourse analysis,[8] the use of technology,[9] and issues of ideology such as cultural or socio-political bias that are caught up in the work of translation.[10]   Along the way, Ciampa discusses the need to understand the original communication situation since the target reader may not recognize the implicit communication happening in the original text, plus he explores how the current readers' (or listeners') own cognitive environment may be causing interference as they are making unintended inferences from the translation choices.[11]

Ciampa also addresses power issues and contends that too often in Bible translation projects, the philosophy of translation was or is determined by "outsiders"— the missionaries or a sponsoring agency—rather than the needs, desires, or priorities of the local communities. This is now understood as potentially self-defeating—not to mention patronizing and colonialistic—as little "buy-in" from the start will likely result in little buy-in at the end. He argues that local users and local leadership should be playing a lead role in the decision-making process.[12] He also calls for ethical decisions about paratext material so that one preferred interpretation or doctrinal stance does not get asserted over another.[13] He defends the production of the variety of translations intended to meet a variety of needs, and so is critical of those who attempt "to demean or even demonize translations which reflect a different translation philosophy or which have

---

[6] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 74-77.
[7] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 77-79.
[8] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 79-81.
[9] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 81-83.
[10] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 83-90.
[11] cf. Ciampa's article "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators." International Journal of Frontier Missiology 28, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 139-148.
[12] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 60-61.
[13] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 64-65.

a different purpose (*Skopos*) or readership in mind."[14] He calls for greater mutual respect

for the various approaches and the various translations that come out of those approaches.

Below is a compilation of the topics addressed in this article, with some brief

explanation. The headings below do not correspond to the headings in the article. These

are the categories under consideration in the development of a unit on Bible translation

issues in the Kuyper College undergraduate curriculum.

A. The starting text

- MSS traditions (Eclectic vs. Byzantine Majority, Apocrypha, Septuagint, KJV text)

B. Approach to or Philosophy of translation

- Utilizing *Skopostheorie* based on intended audience and function of the translation: liturgical reading, devotional use, academic use, children's use, etc.
- Choices of translation form: written, spoken, sign, graphic, etc.
- Formal vs. thought-for-thought continuum
- Foreignization in some language or form choices vs. domestication of language or forms

C. Cognitive studies/Cognitive linguistics/Communications theory issues

- Frame semantics and consideration of gaps between the cultural/contextual frames of the original communication setting with its composer(s)/recipient(s) vs. today's recipients, including meaning affiliated with genre and other literary forms (also see D below)
- Relevance theory and attention to explication of implicit information vs. the possibility of perceived wordiness or pedantic renderings (since meaning is inferred through the communication act, with the assumption that the sender is conveying relevant information in a shared cognitive environment)

---

[14] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches," 99.

D. Discourse Analysis / Textlinguistics/Literary theory

- Attention to translation and meaning of the larger text, including techniques in the larger text that convey cohesion, coherence, and prominence, and rendering of gaps due to culture and language-specific schemes

E. Ideological issues

- Theological, doctrinal, confessional bias
- Cultural bias, including colonial dominance issues, language dominance, gender issues, translators' bias

F. Technology

Another article, "Translation" by Stefano Arduini[15] is similar to that of Ciampa's

in that it gives an overview of what Translation Studies entails, but this article is not

specifically about Bible translation. Arduini traces the progress of Translation Studies as

its focus expanded from mainly linguistics discussions to consideration of the form of the

text, the function of the text (fleshed out in *Skopostheorie*), intercultural communication

issues, ideologies of texts and translators, and polysystems theory, which explores the

value or role of translations in literary culture and the interplay with "canonical" texts of

that literary culture.   He also references cognitive linguistics; he writes,

> The new cognitivist approaches can offer new possibilities to the broad area of studies on translation…So the explosion of semantics in the cognitive studies and the idea that metaphors structure our world perception …and encourage a possible rethinking of translation studies.[16]

He continues,

> For example concepts like domain, frame, profile, mental spaces, and similarity can be very productive in this area. The distinction between

---

[15] Stefano Arduini, "Translation."
[16] Arduini, "Translation."

profile-frame and dominion is particularly useful in order to understand the nature of phenomenon such as the semantic differences between words and their apparent equivalent in other languages. Or to understand in which sense synonyms are different.[17]

Thus Arduini, a respected scholar in the field of Translation Studies, covers issues of philosophy of translation, cognitive studies, literary form, and ideological issues in this article—a significant overlap of the categories in Ciampa's article. This article does not have quite the breadth of Ciampa's, as Arduini does not touch on "starting text" or paratext issues, issues of technology, and the use of non-text media, but it touches on or overlaps with the other broad categories that play a vital role in the practice of translation today.

The book *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* by Jeremy Munday[18] also lays out the fundamentals of the discipline of Translation Studies and so is an appropriate guide for this curriculum development. He spends the first quarter of the book walking the reader through the foundational movements in the history of translation and then devotes the rest of the book to exploring the more recent developments in translation. Regarding the philosophy of translation, he notes that "word for word" and "sense for sense" debates go back to Cicero, Jerome, and Dryden. He also shows how Schleiermacher is the modern scholar who introduces the idea of gearing a translation toward the target audience to make it completely natural; this is in contrast to gearing it toward the source text, which would leave the target audience with having to deal with the "foreignness" of the text.[19] Munday also gives the context around the goal of

---

[17] Arduini, "Translation."

[18] Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Application*, 3rd edition. (London: Routledge, 2012).

[19] Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*; see chapter 2.

"equivalence,"[20] and dedicates a whole chapter to functional theories of translation, including *Skopostheorie* with its emphasis on the purpose of the text for the target audience.[21] As Munday's book delves into the historical details of developments in Translation Studies, the broad categories that emerge in this systematic, comprehensive overview do in fact overlap significantly with the overarching categories found in the two articles above, including philosophy of translation, consideration of literary forms, attention to ideology and cultural bias issues, and discourse analysis, with its focus on communication beyond the sentence level.   Although the book references Martin Luther, Eugene Nida, and others who have been associated with Bible translation along the way,[22] Munday, like Arduini, is writing about general translation issues, so it is not surprising that his book omits a few of Ciampa's categories. For example, he writes nothing on the decisions about the starting text or about paratext materials. He also is concerned with written documents only—both as a source and also as the target—so that issues of non-text media forms are not a topic of debate or discussion in the book. The use of technology is also not a main concern.

    In trying to get a handle on the multiple disciplines that are involved in translation and Translation Studies as a discipline, Susan Bassnett, in her book *Translation Studies,*[23] begins by noting that this discipline has been changing at a feverish pace but is finally hitting its stride. Her preface to the third edition captures the diversification of translation studies in recent history, as she highlights Ernst-August Gutt's relevance theory, Katharina Weiss's and Hans Vermeer's *Skopos* theory, Gideon Toury's research into

---

[20] Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*; see chapter 3.
[21] Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*; see chapter 5.
[22] Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*; see chapters 2-3.
[23] Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002).

pseudotranslation, and the "corpus-based translation enquiry" explored by Mona Baker; she also alludes to the relationship between translation and technology, the importance of literary studies, and, of course, the long-standing role of linguistics in translation.[24] She continues with a discussion of the role that culture and bias plays in translation, and, like Arduini, discusses the rise of polysystems theory.[25]

Bassnett adopts a division of the discipline of Translation Studies into four parts, which she acknowledges contain overlapping themes. The first of her divisions is the history of translation, which includes the development of literary and translation theories, as well as the processes of commissioning and publishing translations, the role and function of translations in history, the methodological developments in translation, and an analysis of the role of the translator. Her second category is concerned with issues in the target language culture and the influence of the translated text on the target language systems. The third section explores linguistics issues in both the source language and target language(s) and so covers the subjects of phonemes, morphemes, lexemes, syntax, etc., as well as problems with equivalence and untranslatability. The fourth area, which she refers to as "Translation and Poetics," is about literary issues in translation, including genre and form.[26]

Bassnett's book shows that Ciampa's overview of issues in Bible translation is very much aligned with that of influential scholars in Translation Studies. She references things that come under every area of study that Ciampa mentions except for "starting text" and "paratext' issues. And while her four broad categories offer a potential alternative to Ciampa's organizational structure of translation topics, Bassnett's four

---

[24] Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 2.
[25] Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 4-6, 7-9.
[26] Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 18.

categories in fact overlap each other a great deal which makes them unwieldy as a paradigm for curriculum categories aimed at an introductory-level student.

The article "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies" by Aloo Osotsi Mojola and Ernst Wendland[27] is the last in the list of key documents for comparison with Ciampa's article, as the authors' goal is to demonstrate how Translation Studies has moved away from linguistics as its main discipline and become more multi-dimensional and overlapping with numerous disciplines. As the title reveals, this article, like Ciampa's, is primarily concerned with how Translation Studies has affected Bible translation. The article opens with an overview of the limitations of Charles Tabor and Eugene Nida's approach to translation in TAPOT,[28] reviewed below, including their illusory goals of achieving equivalent transfer of the original writer's intention as well as equivalent function or effect in the target culture as in the original culture. (The authors do point out, however, that an overview of all of Nida's work and writings reveal that he also saw the importance of working across disciplines.)[29] The authors argue that Bible translation as a discipline needs to take seriously the recent advances in Translation Studies, including the complexities of cultural differences such as the unevenness of cultures, languages, and peoples, the complications of transmission of ideas via different languages, the power dynamics and colonialist outlooks evident in the history of Bible translation, and the role of the translators who bring their own prejudices, ideologies, and agendas.[30]

---

[27] Aloo Osotsi Mojola and Ernst Wendland, "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies" (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2002).
[28] Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Tabor, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Brill, 1982). See overview below.
[29] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 6.
[30] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 8.

Mojola and Wendlend then give brief introductions to contemporary approaches to translation that take seriously the Bible as literature; these are outlined by six headings: 1) Functionalist Approach, 2) Descriptive Approach, 3) Text-Linguistic Approach, 4) Relevance Theory Approach, 4) Post-Colonial Approaches, 5) Literalist Approach, and 6) Foreignization Versus Domestication. (The authors' summaries of these issues are more fully described in the relevant subheadings below.) The headings in this short survey of contemporary approaches, along with the authors' introductory material, show significant overlap with Ciampa's article, as they reference issues of philosophy, cognitive studies, textlinguistics, and ideology. The authors then explain the various concepts and approaches in a succinct way, which is useful for lecture material in the development of the curriculum. However, the article does not cover the complete process of Bible translation, and so again is not as all-encompassing as Ciampa's article which also considers starting text issues and issues of technology.

So while Ciampa's article obviously does not go as deeply into the theories and subjects as the books, it does in fact give the broadest picture of the task of translation, and of Bible translation in particular. Because of time limitations in the Kuyper College course, the curriculum will not include issues of technology; this topic less directly affects the goal of the class which is to prepare students to be prepared to counsel and educate church leaders and laity about the nature of the Bible and about Bible translation issues which have repeatedly become a source of divisiveness and discord.

Key Works in Translation Studies to Guide Lectures and In-Class Activities

The Starting Text

In *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority*, John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy list and defend twenty-one propositions about the complexity of the composition of the Old Testament and New Testament texts. While they maintain a high view of scripture,[31] they aim to educate twenty-first century text-centered readers about the danger of operating with anachronistic lenses when it comes to understanding the nature of the biblical (or any) ancient "text" or an ancient "author."[32] The audience is reminded that in the ancient world, "books" did not exist, and there were no singular authors as such. Rather, authorities and institutions had their competent "tradents" compose needed documents that would hold the authority of the king or whomever; the tradents remained anonymous.[33]

Walton and Sandy also emphasize that orality or oral tradition was key both in the composition as well as the passing down of scriptures, since both OT and NT recipients were part of hearing-dominate societies that had low literacy rates.[34] They explain that the biblical texts were performed within communities by a reader-performer who would read the text aloud or say it from memory, and that this performer was responsible for audience understanding.[35] As multiple people would have performed segments of the biblical text over many centuries, the oral text inevitably changed over the years as those readers and performers updated the language of the texts in order for it to communicate

---

[31] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 11-12
[32] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 17-28.
[33] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 25-26.
[34] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 17ff-83-84.
[35] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 83, 92ff.

effectively to their contemporary audiences.[36] The authors point out, in fact, that the

Hebrew language did not exist at the time of Abraham, and while Moses would have

spoken something closer to Hebrew, it is not the same Hebrew of our current Hebrew

Bible.[37] Oral tradition preserved the content, but the language and other details like

place names were changed over time. Texts in the New Testament were also composed

for an oral performance culture and likely went through many changes in the years before

being written down.[38]

The authors also acknowledge that, while some divergent versions of a text may

be due to scribal error, others may be due to the fact that multiple variations of written

versions went out from the beginning, e.g., a longer and a shorter version of Mark or

Romans, or two versions of Acts.[39] The authors do remind readers, however, that even

with the multitude of variants, "there is no aspect of theology seriously in doubt."[40]

The book's attention to oral history and the complexity of biblical authorship

underscores the impossibility of arriving at a single, definitive autograph that undergirds

each of the biblical texts. (This in turn reveals the complexity in discerning the intention

of the "author" of a given text for the purposes of translation.) Acceptance of the fact

that there are multiple editions or even multiple "originals"—and that this is perfectly in

tune with the nature of ancient holy writings which came out of oral traditions in various

locations—allows students to see first of all that God's primary endeavor is to

communicate with people through various cultural means, including language changes,

---

[36] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 32-34, 39ff.
[37] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 32-33.
[38] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 81ff.
[39] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 173.
[40] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 179.

and second of all, encourages some flexibility in perspectives regarding the starting texts for Bible translation.

The book *When God Spoke Greek: the Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible* by Timothy Michael Law[41] also takes the reader on a journey through the assembling of the biblical text, and uses the Septuagint as the focal point. Law follows the up-and-down trajectory of the Septuagint's status from the early days (3rd century B.C.E.)[42] through the time of Jerome (with brief references to the Reformation era), and along the way argues that a broader spectrum of Christian traditions should include the Septuagint as canon, as do the Orthodox branches of Christianity, among others. The book includes information from the more recent work on the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), which have been a gold mine for Septuagint studies, and have made it even more clear that various Hebrew text traditions existed side-by-side in the same storehouse.[43] These texts were being used as scriptures in the years prior to the coming of Christ, and Law shows that the Greek Septuagint traditions are directly linked to these Hebrew variants.[44] He admits that the Masoretic Text is also substantiated in the DSS,[45] but spends a great deal of time pointing out that the Septuagint was clearly used more often for New Testament quotes than the Hebrew Bible tradition.[46] In fact, Law reminds the readers that despite the fact that Paul's diverse study and travels would likely have put him in touch with many variants,[47] he and other NT writers must have highly valued the Septuagint as they seem completely at ease using the Greek translations of the OT in their

---

[41] Timothy Michael Law, *When God Spoke Greek: the Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[42] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 59ff.
[43] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 25.
[44] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 20ff.
[45] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 24-25.
[46] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 99ff.
[47] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 93ff.

writings.[48] Along the way, Law explains how the Septuagint is useful for modern

translation and interpretation (e.g., "glory of God"[49]), and, also on the topic of translation,

points out that, during the century leading up to Christ, scripture translation philosophy

seemed to move from a more dynamic to a word-for-word approach.[50] (See more on

Septuagint and translation philosophy under the heading "Philosophy of Translation"

below.)

Throughout, Law articulates with some passion why he believes that the inclusion

of or consideration of the Septuagint collection in textual criticism discussions not only

aligns with standard approaches to ancient literature—the oldest text is the most

reliable—but that its inclusion could enhance Christian theology by, e.g., revealing a

softer image of a punitive God.[51] Perhaps the main point to draw on for students is the

idea that "the Bible" has not been uniform for all people for all time, and that realizing

and accepting this can allow for a broader perspective on "starting text" issues. In fact,

acknowledging and accepting this fact would put the students in the same camp as

Augustine, who, as Law points out, believed "that the lack of uniformity in the

manuscripts could be helpful and that, even if multiple versions of the same biblical book

exist, they could all be helpfully appropriated as Christian scripture."[52] The examples

throughout the book where he lays out the Septuagint options side by side with the NRSV

could be very useful as part of a lecture and in-class activity which would give students a

sense of the differences between the manuscripts.

---

[48] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 105ff.
[49] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 96.
[50] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 56-57.
[51] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 169-170.
[52] Law, *When God Spoke Greek*, 167.

Philosophy of Translation

The Theory and Practice of Translation (TAPOT) by Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber [53] helps contemporary readers understand the 20th-century movement in translation studies from word-for-word to meaning-based translations. Nida and Tabor highlight the goal of translation as functional or dynamic equivalence, which entails communicating the message of the source-text author to the target-text reader via a carefully constructed translation which will carry the referential and connotive meaning of the original.[54] Contextual meaning takes priority, so that maintaining a one-to-one correspondence between source-text and target-text languages would not be a priority. In fact, they argue, one-to-one relationships between words of different languages simply do not exist.[55] They state that every language can communicate the totality of human experience, but the symbols used to communicate will not divide up that experience in the same way in every language.[56] The authors contend that the language of the Bible is informative, expressive, and imperative. In other words, readers/listeners need to understand the information, feel its relevance, and have an action-response to its translated form.[57] And because the Bible announces guiding principles for conduct, "the renderings must be sufficiently clear that one can understand not merely what they must have meant to people in ancient times but also how they can be applied in the present-day context."[58] They claim that the dynamic equivalent should evoke responses that are "substantially equivalent" to the responses experienced by the original receptors. They

---

[53] Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Brill, 1982).
[54] Nida and Tabor, *TAPOT*, 1-8, 12-14, 22-24.
[55] Nida and Tabor, *TAPOT*, 15-22.
[56] Nida and Tabor, *TAPOT*, 19-22.
[57] Nida and Tabor, *TAPOT*, 24-25.
[58] Nida and Tabor, *TAPOT*, 26.

assert that this approach makes the translation "more meaningful" as well as "more accurate."[59] While the flaws of this work have been elucidated by many (such as the oversimplification of traversing cultural barriers, time barriers, the multiplicity of authors and recipients, and the complexity of the text-linguistic and literary issues—see below), Nida and Tabor laid a foundation for discussing the philosophy and the complexity of translating words and concepts from one language into another, which can be utilized in an introductory level unit on Bible translation.

Current insights on Nida and Tabor can be found in Stephen Pattemore's chapter in *A History of Bible Translation* entitled "Framing Nida."[60] He notes that Nida and Taber's TAPOT, rather than presenting a theory of translation, is a conscious methodology—prescriptive, not descriptive.[61] He argues that the methodology is based on three important theoretical foundations, however: 1) communication theory, 2) the 3-stage transformational grammar theory, and 3) lexical semantics and componential analysis.[62] Pattemore explains that there was a reaction against Nida's models from outside and even inside the UBS. Functionalist, descriptive, text-linguistic, relevance-theoretic, post-colonial, literalist, and foreignization/domestication approaches pushed old attempts at theories,[63] and in the years following TAPOT, Nida's critics in biblical scholarship argued that a "same response" cannot be achieved across time, space, and language barriers. According to Pattemore, Nida himself was also already moving away from the idea that the target text readers should respond to the translation in the same way

---

[59] Nida and Tabor, *TAPOT*, 28-31.
[60] Stephen Pattemore, "Framing Nida," in *History of Bible Translation*, vol. 1, A History of Bible Translation, ed. Philip A. Noss (Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007).
[61] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 219-220.
[62] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 221-222.
[63] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 234-250.

that the original text readers responded, and moved instead toward the lesser goal of

comprehending the translated text in the way the original readers understood the original

text,[64] as seen in *From One Language to Another* by Nida and J. de Waard.[65] Pattemore

highlights that Nida and deWaard were also moving toward a sociosemiotic approach,

although they grounded it in historical or original purpose of the original text, unlike

others who would prefer to sever the document from its original purpose or setting. [66]

Another book that brings philosophy of translation issues to the fore is *Exploring*

Translation Theories by Anthony Pym.[67] Pym is concerned with the big picture of

translation theory rather than the minutia, and throughout the book he highlights the

dialogue among leading scholars in the field. He argues that awareness of the various

theories will have practical benefits when it comes to everyday choices for translators as

well as when encountering new problems in translation, since theory provides the

infrastructure or categories that make creative thinking possible.[68] Pym notes that there is

a lack of consistency in the use of terms and concepts in the discipline of Translation

Studies. This was captured well in his chart on "polarities of directional equivalence,"

reproduced in the table below.[69]

---

[64] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 224-225.
[65] J. de Waard and E. A. Nida, *From One Language to Another* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986).
[66] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 225-227.
[67] Anthony Pym, *Exploring Translation Theories* (London: Routledge, 2010).
[68] Pym, *Exploring Translation*, 4.
[69] The table and contents have been reproduced from the table in Pym, *Exploring Translation*, 32.

Table 3.1
Pym's Polarities of Directional Equivalence

Cicero:	ut interpres	ut orator
Schleiermacher:	foreignizing	domesticating
Nida:	formal	dynamic
Newmark:	semantic	communicative
Levý:	anti-illusory	illusory
House:	overt	covert
Nord:	documentary	instrumental
Toury:	adequacy	acceptability
Venuti (1995):	resistant	fluent

Pym himself, in place of the term "source text," shares his preference for the alternative

term "start text." However, he also cautions the use of binary categories like "start" and

"target." He writes,

> Why, for example, should our terms reduce translation to an affair of just
> two sides ("start" and "target")? Surely each target is only a link toward
> further actions and aims, in further cultures and languages? For that
> matter, texts usually contain traces of more than one language and
> culture.[70]

The confusion around the term "equivalence" is one of the dominant themes in

this book. Pym promotes the idea of "directional equivalence" (translation that cannot be

back-translated to the original) over the idea of "natural equivalence" (translation that can

---

[70] Pym, *Exploring Translation*, 2.

be back-translated to the original). He chides Nord and others for distancing themselves

from the term equivalence if and when a particular translation project's *skopos* and

"brief" puts the function of the source or start document as key to the project. He writes,

> These writers somehow equated equivalence with literalism, whereas the
> concept of equivalence had been developed precisely so that the
> "dynamic" categories could be distinguished from literalism. Nida's
> approach, and certainly Koller's, could also legitimately be called
> "functionalist."[71]

At the end of the book Pym reveals his thoughts on why term "equivalence" stays

in use. He writes,

> Equivalence, for me, is an efficient social illusion. People believe in it just
> as they believe in the value of the money they carry in their pockets; we
> believe in these things even when there is no linguistic certainty behind
> equivalence.[72]

The overall value of this book is in Pym's interaction of theories that undergird

and propel Translation Studies as a discipline, even his fallback "theory," indeterminacy,

which in Translation Studies is the idea that if a given text can cause many different

translations, then none of the translations can be wholly "determined" by that text, thus

necessitating a measure of free will for translator(s) in the translation process. Pym

encourages the readers not to fall into one theoretical camp, but rather use all the theories

for the benefit of translation.[73] His discussion of these theories, including his thoughts on

equivalence, provides substantive material for class lecture and discussion that will

enable students to appreciate the difficulties of Bible translation.

---

[71] Pym, *Exploring Translation*, 48.
[72] Pym, *Exploring Translation*, 159.
[73] Pym, *Exploring Translation*, 92 .

David Burke's chapter in *A History of Bible Translation,* "The First Versions: The Septuagint, the Targums, and the Latin,"[74] reminds the reader that today's Bible translators stand in a long line of people who have struggled with methods and philosophies of translation.   Jerome, in fact, worked with the same tension as many today,

> namely, that translation as a transferal of a message from one "language map" into another receptor language must be done in a way that is faithful to both the source text and the receptor language, if it is to be both accurate and understandable.[75]

This tension is seen in his description of translation as "putting the source language's idioms into their appropriate equivalents in the receptor language" yet also making the claim that each word of scriptural texts are sacred.[76] The author shows that giving attention to early translations like the Aramaic Targumim and the Septuagint can also give insight into translation issues today. For example, study of the Aramaic word-pairs, which were substituted for a single Hebrew word, is not only helpful in understanding ancient word meanings, but could demonstrate that many early translated texts that had been accepted as scripture do not demonstrate a word-for-word approach.[77]

In *Invitation to the Septuagint,*[78] Karen Jobes and Moises Silva also show that the Septuagint's many translators used an array of translation styles as they completed their Hebrew to Greek or Aramaic to Greek translations. Many translators even introduced interpretive elements into their translations, likely because they had oral versions in mind,

---

[74] David Burke, "The First Versions: The Septuagint, the Targums, and the Latin" in *History of Bible Translation*, vol. 1, A History of Bible Translation, ed. Philip A. Noss (Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007).
[75] Burke, "The First Versions," 88.
[76] Burke, "The First Versions," 88.
[77] Burke, "The First Versions," 81.
[78] Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005).

or because they wanted to communicate a certain element of the text in a way that would clearly communicate to the Greek reader.[79] Referencing Richard Longenecker, the authors point out that in the Gospels, the OT quotes of Jesus are most often from the Septuagint,[80] and that the book of Hebrews, Peter, and the Pauline letters also use the Septuagint version. They write,

> Take, for instance, I Corinthians 2:16, where Paul quotes LXX Isaiah 40:13a, "Who has know the mind [nous] of the Lord?" even though the Hebrew text has "spirit" [ruah]. The rendering of the LXX translator can perhaps be defended as an attempt to clarify the meaning of the original. But whatever we may think of the translator's technique, Paul could surely have changed nous ("mind") to pneuma ("spirit") if he had wanted. His choice not to do so was probably intentional, and it gives us an important insight into Paul's use of Scripture, namely, the role played by the LXX in his theological reflection.[81]

This example by Jobes and Silva from I Corinthians would be a great entry point into class discussion on how the variation of translation philosophy shown in the Septuagint has been canonized in the New Testament scriptures.

Walton and Sandy support Jobes and Silva's conclusions on the Septuagint in a section of their book *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority*. They point out that the Septuagint translators had varying philosophies or approaches to their translation work, so that there was freedom on the part of the translators in how they transferred the meaning of the Hebrew and Aramaic into Greek.[82] While some strived to preserve the style and wording of the original, others prioritized the transfer of meaning to their Greek-speaking audience. They write of the Septuagint,

---

[79] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 91-92, 93-101.
[80] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 193-194.
[81] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 198.
[82] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 187.

> This Greek translation is useful in studying the Bible, especially because it antedates other surviving copies of the Hebrew Scriptures. But being a translation, and with the translators' inconsistent work of translation, it's often difficult to back-translate from Greek into Hebrew in hopes of determining exactly what the Hebrew text behind the Septuagint actually said.[83]

They explain, "A characteristic of oral culture was the recognition that exact wording was rarely possible and usually unnecessary to represent truth reliably."[84] Some translators added interpretive elements in their translation process, and these free translations of the OT in Greek were not only what the early Christians would have read or heard, they were used regularly by NT writers who preferred Septuagint versions over others.[85] The flexibility shown by the Septuagint translators made sense in their context, for "in the cognitive environment of ancient oral culture, what the translators did was acceptable and legitimate."[86]

Aspects of translation theory are similarly brought to light in the book *Translation and Survival,*[87] as Tessa Rajak attempts to understand the varying views of the translators of the Septuagint, i.e., their views of what a translation might be able to do or accomplish beyond communicate basic information. She writes, "We shall discover that in fact, and paradoxically, the Greek Bible, through its chosen linguistic vehicle, promoted close contact with the Hebrew language, rather than the reverse."[88] She says also,

> The koine was shaped by the translators in such a way as to make it possible both to 'go Greek' and to 'stay Jewish'...Their seemingly artless and 'literal' translation technique, oriented more towards the source than the target language (in terms sued by translation theorists), made a

---

[83] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 187.
[84] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 186.
[85] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 188-189.
[86] Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 188.
[87] Tessa Rajak, *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[88] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 7.

connection for readers, and above all for hearers, with the translation language of the Jewish ethnos, biblical Hebrew….Their auditory impact turns out to play an important part in this.[89]

She gives several examples of how they did innovate, however:

Semantic innovation, the coinage of new words and expressions or of new meanings for familiar words, is a hallmark of the Septuagint language, the very term 'diaspora' being one of them. This vocabulary, far from being a mere series of solutions to challenges of translation, represents the translators' intensely creative way of melding and contemporizing their different thought worlds.[90]

She adds, "It is a paradox that the translators' conservatism allowed at the same time a highly creative usage of Greek. Adherence to a relatively close translation went together with word-formation and semantic innovation on an unusually large scale."[91]   In her final pages, Rajak concludes, "The creative production of different types of Bible translation is a central element in that small corpus of Jewish Greek literature which has survived the transition to Christianity and the ravages of time."[92]

These books on the Septuagint give insight into the importance of a translation of scriptures for the people of God, and helps the readers better understand the difficulty and the variety of philosophical approaches used by Septuagint translators as they undertook the task of translating scriptures for a people whose language and culture was changing. A lecture and discussion on these aspects of the Septuagint will be particularly helpful in pushing students out of their comfort zones as they consider the interpretive license of some Septuagint translators whose translations made it into the New Testament canon.

---

[89] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 10.
[90] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 11.
[91] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 162.
[92] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 313.

The article "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies" by Aloo Osotsi Mojola and Ernst Wendland not only offers an overarching picture of Translation Studies (see above), but also contains introductory, succinct explanations of advances in Translation Studies theory. In the section titled "Functionalist Approach,"[93] the authors cover literary approaches and *skopos* theory as represented by Katharina Reiss, Hans Vermeer, and also Christiane Nord, who suggests that translators start with a prospectus or "brief" that gives information about their intended audience, the motives of the translation backers and translation team, and the medium chosen for the translation; the translators then connect these decisions to the purpose (or *skopos*) of the translated text, which, Nord argues, must still be compatible with what is known about the purpose of the source text. Mojola and Wendland also briefly discuss the "Literalist Approach,"[94] which focuses on the source text and source rhetorical forms. This approach may produce translations that are unnatural in the target language and thus have "foreignizing" elements. This subject is also covered in the authors' final section entitled "Foreignization Versus Domestication,"[95] in which the authors highlight the thought of scholars like Lawrence Venuti who challenge the assumption that translations which make the writers and/or characters sound like they are expressing themselves in a manner appropriate to target-culture norms are superior translations. Venuti and others point out that domesticating translations can, for example, overly tame a difficult or dynamic text, or may offer an inaccurate interpretation of the source text. Exploring the pros and cons of the foreignization and domestication debate with students will give help them see beyond the binary categories of "bad" and "good."

---

[93] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 13.
[94] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 23-24.
[95] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 24ff.

Of main concern in Lourens de Vries's article "Translation as Culture," is the

insight on the philosophical debate between foreignizing and domesticating translations.

De Vries, with reference to de Jong, indicates that all Bible translations unavoidably have

foreignizing elements, which leads to this irony:

> Domesticating translations try to suppress foreignness but the result is a very sharp contrast between the fluent text of the Bible translation and the 'weirdness' of the persons, events, attitudes and cultural practices denoted by the fluent text (de Jong 2012). This contrast evokes and enhances the experience of foreignness in the reader.[96]

He also writes of the difficulty of identifying and communicating the foreign elements as

a translator:

> Consciously communicating the cultural otherness of the Bible in a translation requires the translator first of all to identify what the very own otherness or foreignness actually is, where it resides; it requires to theorize and locate the otherness of the Bible. But of course this understanding and theorizing of the Hebrew or Greek otherness and individuality can only be done in domestic terms. This is the 'doom' of domestication: even when translators try to convey the otherness of the Bible in translation, they understand this alterity in the terms of their own time and background and they communicate this otherness in terms that their contemporary audiences can relate to.[97]

This article provides great background for the planned discussions of

foreignization and domestication in the curriculum.

The books and articles above by Munday, Arduini, Bassnett, Pym, and Mojola

and Wendlund all reference the work of Christiane Nord, either by summarizing her work

on the functionalist approach to translation, or by quoting directly from her writings, so

her foundational work, *Translating as Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approached*

---

[96] Lourens de Vries, "Translation as Culture."
[97] deVries, "Translation as Culture."

84

Explained,[98] is indispensible for background or lecture material on a functionalist

approach to translation and *skopos* issues. Nord is an advocate of *Skopostheorie*, a term

coined by Hans Vermeer who emphasized that translation is a purposeful act of human

communication that encompasses everything from cultural issues to linguistic issues,[99] so

that every translational process should be guided by the purpose of the translational

action.[100] So while starting points for translations are of course the source texts,

Skopostheorie especially emphasizes the trajectory of the translation, thus giving special

attention to the needs of the addressees or recipients.[101] She clarifies further:

> This rule is intended to solve the eternal dilemmas of free vs faithful
> translation, dynamic vs formal equivalence, good interpreters vs slavish
> translators, and so on. It means that the Skopos of a particular translation
> task may require a 'free' or a 'faithful' translation, or anything between
> these two extremes, depending on the purpose for which the translation is
> needed. What it does not mean is that a good translation should *ipso facto*
> conform or adapt to target-culture behaviour or expectations, although the
> concept is often understood this way.[102]

In fact, "fidelity" or loyalty to the text is an important counterpoint, she argues.[103] Nord

also explains that the commissioner or initiator generally determines the *Skopos,* and that

the *Skopos* is put into a translation brief that guides translation decisions.[104] The brief

should contain 1) the (intended) text function(s) (see below), 2) the target-text

addressee(s), (3) the (prospective) time and place of text reception, 4) the medium over

---

[98] Christiane Nord, *Translation Theories Explored*, vol. 1, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*:
Functionalist Approaches Explained (Manchester: St. Jerome, 1997).
[99] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 11.
[100] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 27.
[101] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 12.
[102] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 29.
[103] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 32.
[104] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 30.

which the text will be transmitted, and (5) the motive for the production or reception of the text.[105]

Nord's book also shows that she puts a high value on the source text along with the target text. She notes that the status of the source text clearly is much lower in *Skopostheorie* than in equivalence-based theories, but she still maintains its importance. She writes,

> My model includes the analysis of extratextual and intratextual aspects of the communicative action; it is designed to identify the function-relevant elements *in both the existing source text and the prospective target text as defined by the translation brief* (italics mine.) By comparing the Skopos with the source-text functions before starting to translate, translators should be able to locate the problems that will arise in the translating process. They should thus be able to devise a holistic strategy for their solution (cf. Nord 1996a).[106]

When Nord speaks of "intended text function" which is the first component of the translation brief (see above), she is referring to four different functions of the text, listed below. The first one on the list is adapted is from Roman Jakobsen's model of language functions, and the final three proposed by Karl Buhler.[107] They could be summarized in this way:

1. Phatic: this communication function aims at opening and closing the channels between sender and receiver. It also defines and models the social relationship connections between sender and receiver, using words, forms, context, etc.

2. Referential: the referential function of an utterance is the reference to the objects or phenomena of a particular world. It could be explicitly stated or implicit, for

---

[105] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 59-60.
[106] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 14.
[107] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 39-44.

which there needs to be presupposed knowledge, which can be difficult for the translator to convey.

3. Expressive: this is the sender's attitudes toward the objects or phenomena of the world. It could be emotive, evaluative, ironic, etc., or have a combination of expressive qualities. The communication is based on what the sender assumes is shared knowledge.

4. Appellative-persuasive: this function of communication implies doing what it takes to induce the response from the receiver which the sender intended.

Nord explains that most texts operate with all of these functions at some point. Also, some of the overarching functions would naturally change from a source text to the target text. She writes, e.g., "What is appellative in the source text (for example, reminding the readers of their own world) becomes informative for target readers (showing what the source culture is like)."[108]

Nord shows that the four functions also interact with the translation brief in that translation of texts can be put in a spectrum of "foreignization" of the source for the target audience versus "domestication" of the source for the target audience. She uses the term "documentary" for the translation approach that makes source culture and conditions a priority, with the audience taking the role of observer between two parties.[109] She uses the term "instrumental" for the translation approach that stresses the communicative act between the source and target—an approach that is often used for

[108] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 51.
[109] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 51-52.

poetry or children's books.[110] Decisions about the foreignization or domestication of a

target text, then, can affect function. She writes,

> If a documentary translation of a fictional text leaves the source-culture
> setting of the story unchanged, it might create the impression of exotic
> strangeness or cultural distance for the target audience. We may then
> speak of a foreignizing or exoticizing translation. The translation is
> documentary in that *it changes the communicative function of the source
> text* (italics mine).[111]

Lecture material from this book would provide students a nuanced way to look at

Bible translation efforts. Instead of "word for word" vs. "dynamic equivalence," or more

significantly, "right" vs. "wrong" or "good" vs. "bad," they can see begin to assess

translations as "adequate for that *skopos*" or "adequate" for a particular mission and

audience.

In his article "Implementing *Skopostheorie* in Bible Translation,"[112] Nathan Esala

writes about his Bible translation team's efforts to put *Skopostheorie* into practice in

northern Ghana with the Komba language. Referencing Katharina Reiss, Hans Vermeer,

and Christiane Nord, Esala describes *Skopostheorie* as an approach to the *process* of

translation or an "interpretive analytic"[113] that considers the purpose of the translation for

the host community and values continual reference to a translation brief that guides the

translators toward the determined purpose.[114] Esala mentions that the brief for this

project "tended toward domestication"[115] even though they did not use that term as such.

He writes about the dialogue around some key terms like "priest" in which their

---

[110] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 48-50.
[111] Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 49-51.
[112] Nathan Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie in Bible Translation." *The Bible Translator* 64, no. 3 (2013): 300-323.
[113] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 302. See footnote.
[114] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 302-304.
[115] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 306.

foreignizing attempts communicated an undesired Western idea, while the domesticating

attempts were associated with animist culture; he writes similarly of the dialogue around

terms for "God." More often the team selected local terminology, as these choices would

encourage the locals to see that Christ is Lord over their conceptual world.[116] The

translation brief used for this project also prescribed that it must be a written text for use

in public reading for people who have been shaped by orality and especially sensitive to

aural reception. It was also to be a symbol of pride for the community, and thus have a

similar look as other Ghanaian Bible translations.[117] What came out in the article was

how the expatriate and local people were often at odds; e.g., while the expatriate group

supported options aimed for this primarily oral culture, the locals wanted nothing to do

with anything that may have affected literacy efforts.[118] The locals desired to "engage

issues of globalization and modern development rather than retain an exclusively

premodern…worldview,"[119] so this also became part of the purpose and affected some

translation decisions.

Esala encourages more translators to adopt the *Skopostheorie* method in their

work, and to educate other parties involved in Bible translation. He writes,

> As BT practitioners adopt this terminology and explain it to the various
> constituencies, it may foster greater appreciation regarding the different
> purposes of different Bible translation and differing emphases between
> translation organizations, and provide a more fruitful meta-language for
> the translators, theologians, parachurch organizations, and church bodies
> who have opinions on the theological and missiological implications of
> translation decisions.[120]

---

[116] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 308-309.
[117] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 317.
[118] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 314-315.
[119] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 315.
[120] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 306.

He adds, "Perhaps the language of *Skopostheorie* may open up a more fruitful dialogue on the "Son of God" translation debates in Muslim-majority contexts."[121] An introductory-level study of *Skopostheorie* in an undergraduate program answers the call of Esala to educate others in order to have fruitful discussions around these issues. This article can be used to showcase how *Skopostheorie* works in a practical setting, and his examples of struggles around key terms like "priest" and "God" are exactly right for lecture and discussion in class.

The book *From One Medium to Another*[122] is a series of essays that wrestles through various issues of interpretation, communications theory, and media studies to consider this question: How can the message of the Holy Scriptures be faithfully translated and communicated from text to another media form—from one medium to another? And while the book is perhaps a bit dated in that technology has made huge advances since it was published in 1997, the big questions it addresses are still relevant. In the introduction, Hodgson points out that the Bible has been translated through a variety of media for centuries in icons, mosaic, stained glass, painting, and many illustrated texts, and it has thrived in those settings.[123] He adds that while the Bible has felt like a book since the 16th century, most of its years it has existed and thrived as an intersemiotic translation such as oral performance. He includes the categories of homilies or "pulpit sermons whose oral and illustrative nature explicated difficult passages, making them culturally accessible to church laity."[124] The American Bible Society produced a Bible for the blind in 1835, circulated stereopticon slides in the

---

[121] Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 307.
[122] Paul A. Soukup and Robert Hodgson, eds., *From One Medium to Another: Communicating the Bible through Multimedia* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1997).
[123] Soukup and Hodgson, *From One Medium to Another*, 3.
[124] Soukup and Hodgson, *From One Medium to Another*, 4.

1920's, broadcast in radio beginning in 1922, and produced its first television show in 1945.[125]   His approach opens the door to a wide variety of representations of the message of the Bible and leads the reader to consider illustrations, dance, hymns, comic books or graphic novels, and videos.

Using Hodgson's examples from the past and present can help set up class discussions that will connect artistic renditions in catacombs, illuminated manuscripts, and stained-glassed windows to the more recent work in transferring the Bible to audio, film, graphic novel, live plays, television, movies and other media. His inclusion of homilies and sermons into his "media" and "intersemiotic translation" categories will be especially thought-provoking for the Kuyper College students enrolled in Greek, many of whom plan to become pastors and preachers.

Cognitive Studies

Cognitive Linguistics/Frame Semantics

In his article "Translation," Stefano Arduini[126] explains that recent cognitive approaches to translation offer new directions for analysis in the field of Translation Studies that may push the discipline beyond some of its limits. He writes, "the explosion of semantics in the cognitive studies area and the idea that metaphors structure our world perception… encourage a possible rethinking of translation studies."[127] He continues,

> For example concepts like domain, frame, profile, mental spaces, and similarity can be very productive in this area. The distinction between profile-frame and dominion is particularly useful in order to understand the nature of phenomenon such as the semantic differences between words

---

[125] Soukup and Hodgson, *From One Medium to Another*, 5.
[126] Stefano Arduini, "Translation."
[127] Arduini, "Translation," 9.

and their apparent equivalent in other languages. Or to understand in which sense synonyms are different.[128]

He adds that another contribution from cognitive studies is a new understanding of how so often "the differences between languages come from a different way to conceptualize reality. Just like different metaphors imply different conceptualizations, different cultures structure their cognitive universes in different ways." The information from this article will be useful for lecture material, as it succinctly summarizes cognitive studies issues and helps the reader see the difficulty in translating across time and across cultures.

A fine, praxis-oriented introduction to the intersection of cognitive studies and Bible translation comes from Ernst Wendland's book, *Contextual Frames of Reference in Bible Translation: A Coursebook for Bible Translators and Teachers*.[129] The "contextual frames" in the title are at the core of everything he writes in the book. He explains that the discussion in translation cannot stay at the word, sentence, paragraph or discourse level, but needs to be brought to the macro level of cognitive contexts.   He writes, "All the rest (words, etc.) are simply better or worse clues as to how to discover the contexts we wish to translate."[130] He also lays out all the terms being used to cover this same concept. He writes,

> Note that the expression frames of reference is variously termed in the literature of cognitive linguistics (semantics), for example: cognitive frames, semantic domains, conceptual fields, mental representations, mental spaces, world-view categories, (mental) schemata – scenarios – scripts, etc.[131]

---

[128] Arduini, "Translation," 9.

[129] Ernst Wendland, *Contextual Frames of Reference in Translation-Theory and Practice: A Historical Reade*r (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[130] Wendland, *Contextual Frames*, 5.

[131] Wendland, *Contextual Frames*, 4.

Wendland showcases various translation issues that Bible translators and consultants must deal with on a regular basis. In the foreword of Wendland's book, Professor Lourens de Vries summarizes the basic task of a translator in this way:

> Translators can only move from complexity and plurality to single translation decisions in a responsible manner when they do two things: first, they have to reduce the complexity and plurality by analyzing, listing and labeling the pros and cons of each decision from the perspectives of the various contextual frames. This is the descriptive, analytical aspect of the decision-making. Second, they have to weigh the pros and cons of decisions from the perspective of the skopos of the translation, the goal of the project as determined by the commissioners and communities they serve.[132]

His book has many case studies and exercises, and it also incorporates writings from other leaders in the field of translation studies. Wendland uses the example of Matthew 5 to show that a person's or a people's worldview will affect how they understand "Blessed are the poor in spirit." At the end of the book, he sets up a massive case study on Revelation 4 and 5, and demonstrates how culture and worldview, relevance theory, skopos theory, literary questions, intercultural and other "frames" intersect with the translation of these passages into the Chewa language.

David Tuggy adds to the cognitive studies discussion in his 5-part series of presentations titled "Introduction to Cognitive Grammar" in which he explains that cognitive linguistics is a branch of linguistics that interprets language in terms of the conceptual world that underlies a particular language's forms.[133] One of the developments that has come out of cognitive linguistics, according to Tuggy, is Ronald Langacker's work on cognitive grammar. One of the basic premises of cognitive

---

[132] Wendland, *Contextual Frames*.
[133] David Tuggy, "Introduction to Cognitive Grammar," http://www.sil.org/~tuggyd/PowerPoints/powerpoints_english.htm (accessed August 5, 2014.)

linguistics is that language is very closely linked to other cognition. Tuggy uses this definition of language as a necessary starting point: "A language is a structured inventory of conventionalized linguistic units." He gives several examples of these "units of language" including "opening the refrigerator," "whistling Dixie," "scratching your ear," etc. These units are culture-related (people don't say "whistling an opera"); they are also semantic, phonological, and symbolic. The linguistic units that make up a language are conventionalized; that is, they are shared and known to be shared by the relevant group of people. One of Tuggy's main points is that semantic structures feature a profile that stands out as figure against a base or cognitive background. The base is encyclopedic; it contains everything conventionally known about the profiled entity. Profiles can be classified into categories somewhat similar to traditional parts of speech: things, processes, and a-temporal relations (i.e., nominal entities, verbal entities, and adjectives/adverbs/ad-[prep-post]positions).

A main principle that Tuggy presents is that of association, which is when two (or more) concepts occur together in the mind. He argues that all established cognitive relationships, besides whatever else they may be, are associations. The two concepts might "correspond," i.e., they are taken to be the same at some level. To further differentiate, they could have "partial schematicity," so that the one (the standard) is recognized in some distorted form in the other (the target.) OR, the two things could have full schematicity: the standard is recognized without distortion in the target. Humans are wired to think in these schemas and to like it when they find schematicity. Just working in English, he compares the schema of a pencil, a pen, a mechanical pencil, and other writing utensils. As an example of a form schema in English, he shows how

94

nominal-entity food items plus the letter y can be used as a descriptor (sugary, salty); as he develops the schema, he shows that most of the time, this "rule" does not work. He also discusses the concept of "baby/be-bi"; in English (at least in most contexts), the prominent idea of "baby" is that of a newly born human, but other newly born animals would also fit the category. In the language of the Nahuatl tribe, however, a tender shoot from a tree root would also fit into the schema of the word that is used for newly born human.

A brief explanation of this approach to language would be appropriate for the curriculum, since it reveals the complexity of working across languages, and gives insight into the work of translators who consider how the schema of linguistic units (words, phrases, concepts, etc.) in one language matches up or doesn't match up with the schema of units in another language. The "be-bi" example would work well in a lecture/ classroom setting.

Soukup enhances the "cognitive" discussion in his chapter in the book *From One Medium to Another* entitled "Understanding Audience Understanding" in which he considers the role of communication theory in the translation and interpretation process. According to Soukup, the meaning of the text is more of a "constructed meaning" in that whatever is presented interacts with the prior knowledge, beliefs, relationships, experiences, and various other contextual factors of individuals, and meaning is then created based on the interaction between the represented text and those factors.[134] Studies have in fact shown that the audience cannot be passive in the communication

---

[134] Paul A. Soukup, "Understanding Audience Understanding," in *From One Medium to Another: Communicating the Bible through Multimedia*, eds. Paul A. Soukup and Robert Hodgson (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1997), 99.

process. Rather, "direct learning depends somewhat on audience activity."[135] Soukup's

categories of cognitive context above will be useful class lecture material.

In the book *Translation and Survival,* Tessa Rajak adds to the "cognitive

environment" discussion as she attempts to help the readers understand the prominent

role that the "first major translation in western culture," i.e., the Septuagint, played in the

cognitive environment of the NT era, and thus the cognitive environment of the NT

authors as well as the readers/listeners.[136] This Greek translation of the Bible was used

over several centuries in the lives of Greek-speaking Jews around the Mediterranean, as

well as in the lives of those who called themselves Christ-followers. She writes,

> The existence of a Bible in Greek made possible the remarkable flowering
> of the diaspora in the Graeco-Roman Mediterranean. These were the
> communities which determined the pattern of Jewish life outside of
> Palestine for centuries, developing the synagogue as an institution, and
> modeling prototypes of relations with the ruling power, with the dominant
> culture, and with the people whom they mixed.[137]

She highlights ways that the Septuagint may be useful to New Testament studies since

certain Greek words or phrases get associated with Hebrew context. She writes,

> Many of the 'Hebraisms' represent a phenomenon perfectly familiar to
> linguists, that of 'calque,' where a translated word or phrase reproduces in
> the target language the form and structure of its equivalent in the source
> language. To take a notable example, the Greek *eirene* takes on the senses
> of Hebrew shalom, and thus can 'mean' also 'prosperity,' 'health,'
> 'welfare,' or even 'news about.' [138]

---

[135] Paul A. Soukup, "Understanding Audience Understanding," 99.
[136] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 1.
[137] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 7.
[138] Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 128.

Examples from this book would be useful in helping students consider how what we are able to ascertain about the cognitive environment of the original writers and readers/listeners affects meaning as well as Bible translation today.

<center>*Cognitive Studies*</center>

Relevance Theory

Mojola and Wendland in "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies" have a subsection entitled "Relevance Theory Approach," which they explain is part of the larger field of cognitive approaches to communication.[139] It is grounded in the idea that communication between humans happens with an expectation of optimal relevance for the receiver/recipient, who will then do the smallest amount of processing needed in order to interpret the communication. This theory, applied by Ernst-August Gutt to translation studies, helps translators take into account how much effort certain audiences will need to put into the processing of metaphors, etc., being translated from the source text.[140]

Stephen Pattemore adds to the discussion on Relevance Theory by making a case for its usefulness in Bible translation in his chapter "Framing Nida" in *A History of Bible Translation*. Pattemore writes about how translation scholars have often talked past each other on this subject. He gives the background by referencing Ernst-August Gutt:

> Instead of constructing a theory of translation, Gutt viewed translation as a special type of communication, and thus used a particular cognitive theory of communication (Relevance Theory, RT), in which coding and decoding is subordinate to an efficiency-determined process of inference, to provide a theoretical explanation for how translations of various kinds operate. The pursuit of relevance, Gutt claimed, underlies all of communicative

---

[139] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 20.
[140] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 20-21.

<center>97</center>

aspects (in both primary and secondary communications situations) which have been the focus of so much attention in the Bible translation field.[141]

Pattemore notes that the potential usefulness of this cognitive theory of "inference" and "efficiency" has not been realized,[142] and credits the recognition of the complexity of the text comprehension process to, in part, the work that has been done in Relevance Theory.[143] Of primary importance, he explains, is context, "specifically, the audience's access to the original context."[144] Again referencing Gutt, Pattemore explains that translators need to understand that the process of expressing information is different than the process of implicating information, and that sometimes open-endedness should be the goal rather than explication that may distort or limit understanding.[145] Answering critics, Pattemore explains how Relevance Theory is in fact "based on an underlying commitment to meaning-based translation." It also affirms "the need to examine the source text in precisely the detailed way Wendlund, for example, exemplifies."[146] Pattemore adds the following about the significance of Gutt's ideas:

> Since the search for optimal relevance undergirds all communication, the way in which literary and stylistic effects function will be most clearly understood if this is taken into account both on the source text and the target text side. It is in this area of nonliteral language that RT is perhaps the most powerful.[147]

Pattemore sees Relevance Theory as complementing or underwriting other approaches to translation rather than replacing them,[148] and believes that exploring how the context and

---

[141] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 240-241.
[142] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 241.
[143] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 245.
[144] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 254.
[145] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 254-255.
[146] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 256.
[147] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 257.
[148] Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 261.

the mutual cognitive environment shared between the author and readers affects original understanding as well as contemporary understanding will continue to impact translation studies.

Harriet Hill, mentioned by Stephen Pattemore in the context of Relevance Theory issues (see above), brings translation debates and discussions into the world of practice in her book *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads: From Translation to Communication*.[149] Hill conducted research in West Africa among the Adioukrou of Cote d'Ivoire as the Bible was being translated there. She stresses the importance of context in communication, and thus the importance of context in producing a Bible translation that will be understood by the receptor group; the receptor group needs appropriate contextual information that underlies the source text in order to see the significance of the biblical text.[150]

Hill believes that Relevance Theory is especially helpful to translators because it provides a comprehensive model for understanding communication. She explains that Relevance Theory acknowledges communication is inferential, so that the receivers or listeners of utterances have to work out the specific meaning of an utterance (the explicatures) as well as implicated conclusions based on the utterance (implicatures).[151] She adds,

> Biblical authors addressed their audience in the same way that communicators do today. They did not say everything they meant, but guessed their audience's background knowledge and wrote only enough to stimulate in the audience some information they thought the audience had, so that between what they wrote and what their audience knew, the audience could infer the meaning. If they thought the audience did not

[149] Harriet S. Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads: From Translation to Communication* (Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2006).
[150] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 50.
[151] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 14-17.

have the intended contextual information, they supplied it (19; cf. Acts 23:8).[152]

One of the jobs of translators and teachers, Hill argues, is to supply the context needed to attain the best understanding. Perhaps an audience does not access an intended context because the label does not communicate that context.[153] Other times assumptions are accessed with the wrong degree of strength, Hill explains.[154] And sometimes it may be difficult for the audience to access the "strength" in the biblical text. For example, if fish is considered to be the most wonderful food of all (as with the Adioukrou), Jesus' preparation of fish for the disciples will appear especially significant in the interpretation. If not, it may be an overlooked detail.

One of the main difficulties in supplying context, says Hill, is that the communicator cannot cross a certain threshold—giving so much information that the hearer is swimming in the minutia of extra words or concepts—without the possibility of "losing" the hearer, who may decide that the context information isn't worth processing or sifting through, and so reject the text. On the other hand, she argues, not supplying this information at all for fear of overwhelming the receptor group is paternalistic and downplays the intellectual abilities of the receptor group.[155]

Hill explains that determining the needed and appropriate context information takes research on overlapping conceptual fields of the original writer and the contemporary reader.[156] Options for word choices in the receptor language text are then enumerated, and some context may be added in the text or paratext to overcome any

---

[152] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 19.
[153] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 28.
[154] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 30.
[155] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, xiii, 5-12, 14, 59, 71.
[156] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 92-98.

deficiencies. Thus the usefulness of Relevance Theory is that it helps translators consider

whether some aspect of the cultural customs and norms which undergird the biblical text

and which are different from the receptor group should be supplied in order for them to

gain the most insight into the text.[157] One of her examples is the footwashing in John 13;

she explains how most of the Adioukrou readers were unable to grasp the significance of

this act or utter shock of the disciples at this act until they were given the contextual

information about how even Jewish slaves would consider this job beneath them.[158] This

example as well as the fish example above can be utilized as "real-life" examples in the

college classroom showing the complexities of Bible translation.

While Jeannine Brown's book *Scripture as Communication*[159] is not a book about

translation per se, she deals with issues of communication theory as she writes about

good interpretation practices, and so includes an overview of Relevance Theory and

Speech-Act theory.[160] In her overview of J. L. Austin's Speech-Act theory, she explains

the concepts of locution (what is said), illocution (what is accomplished in what is said),

and perlocution (the response evoked by what is said).[161] Brown notes that the reason she

includes this in her discussion about the Bible is that too often she sees the Bible being

treated as a series of propositions, with not enough attention paid to what is being

accomplished in what is said or the speaker's intent for the hearer's response.[162] All three

pieces of this theory highlight the message-sender or speaker, since the author remains

---

[157] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 193-197.
[158] Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads*, 164-165.
[159] Jeannine K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007).
[160] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 32-38.
[161] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 32-33.
[162] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 34-35.

"connected to the text's aims."[163]   The ethics of interpretation, then, demand that the

interpreter work hard to understand the author's intent.[164]   Brown also briefly overviews

Relevance Theory which she explains has two central claims:

> (1) an utterance requires hearers to infer more than is provided in the
> linguistic features of the utterance itself, and (2) hearers will select from
> among a host of contextual inputs those that are the most relevant for
> understanding a particular utterance.[165]

She adds, "speakers…rely on the hearers to supply the most relevant information to

interpret their utterances" so that communication is an inferential process with things that

are left implicit along with what is explicit in the text, and so must be inferred by the

context.[166]   She concludes, "careful attention to the assumed background context will be

important for biblical interpretation."[167]

Brown gives a good introduction to the complexity of communication, and her

book will make great lecture and classroom discussion material as it forces students to

wrestle with implicit meaning and other translation and interpretation issues.

Discourse Analysis/Textlinguistics

Under the section-heading "Text-Linguistic Approach" in the article "Scripture

Translation in the Era of Translation Studies" by Aloo Osotsi Mojola and Ernst

Wendland,[168] the authors reference scholars Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, and briefly

discuss the text-linguistic goal of ascertaining "markedness" in a large section of text,

---

[163] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 35.
[164] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 127-128.
[165] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 35.
[166] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 35-36.
[167] Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 38.
[168] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 19-20.

based on the idea that source text authors highlight or mark things through using unusual

forms or other rhetorical devices within the text. The authors also touch on the

complexity of translating literariness in larger sections of the Bible. They write,

> As Bible translators attempt to deal with the various 'culture-bound' genres and sub-types of ancient Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, a considerable amount of innovative 'modification' may be appropriate for communicating in another linguistic and ethnic setting their artistic beauty, depth of connotative feeling, and/or rhetorical impact. But at the same time translators are generally expected to represent as accurately as possible the content of the original texts and to preserve a verbal decorum in keeping with the primary setting foreseen for the translation's use.[169]

This brief look at textlinguistics gets at the heart of the difficulty in translating the

huge variety of literary styles in the Bible, which is appropriate for classroom discussion

during this curriculum unit.

Stanley Porter's chapter on discourse analysis in his book *Linguistic Analysis Of The Greek New Testament: Studies In Tools, Methods, and Practice*[170] walks the reader

through the various ways that New Testament scholars think about and engage the

discipline of discourse analysis in biblical studies. Porter maintains that what makes a

text a text is "coherence," which he describes as ideational intelligibility, and "cohesion,"

or features in the text that hold it together as a text.[171] The focus of discourse analysis,

then, is in finding prominence in the text through paying attention to frequency,

complexity of concept, or morphology that marks something as prominent,[172] so that the

reader can begin to determine what the text is communicating. For some scholars, he

explains, discourse analysis means combining old models—of syntax, etc.—with

---

[169] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 20.
[170] Stanley E. Porter, *Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015).
[171] Porter, *Linguistic Analysis*, 139.
[172] Porter, *Linguistic Analysis*, 141.

rhetorical analysis. He notes that some students of the text focus on the smaller subject-verb unit initially and work up to the larger text, while others start with the large unit of text.[173]

Like Porter, Stephen Levinsohn's work on discourse analysis concentrates on New Testament Greek rather than on languages in general, which makes it especially appropriate for use in an advanced Greek class.   In the second edition of *Discourse Features of New Testmament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek*,[174] Levinsohn explains that he is building on his previous work in linguistic analysis and takes a functional approach which emphasizes how the language structures are used to convey meaning.[175] When analyzing a "chunk" of a text, he, like Porter, speaks of issues like discourse boundaries, prominence, coherence, and cohesion.[176] One of his basic premises is that "choice implies meaning,"[177] so that the reader pays attention to the word order or clause placement that the writer has chosen from all the possible choices, and gains insight into meaning from that particular choice. For example, when an author goes outside the norm and places pronominal words plus objects in a preverbal position, the reader recognizes that the author has put focus or emphasis on what comes before the verb.[178] He also presents material/interpretation on various standard Greek forms, such as the "men…de" construction which places the "men" phrase or clause in the background position and sets the "de" phrase or clause in

---

[173] Porter, *Linguistic Analysis*, 137-138.
[174] Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook On the Information Structure of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: SIL International, 2000).
[175] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, vii-viii.
[176] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, ix.
[177] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, viii.
[178] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 37.

the prominent position as seen in Luke 3:56, Acts 3:18, Acts 8:4, and Acts 8:25.[179]

Levinsohn's footnote about an exception to this rule in Phil. 1:15-17 is a good reminder

that other context must also play a role in understanding.[180] He mentions the genitive

absolute construction, the historical present in narratives, and anarthrous references to

activated participants as examples of "highlighting" devices to show prominence in the

larger text.[181] He shows how certain tenses can indicate backgrounding, e.g., the

imperfect in narratives with its imperfective aspect, or how others can indicate

foregrounding, e.g., the aorist in narratives with its perfective aspect.[182] Translation

practice and discussions in an advanced language class around issues of boundaries,

choice, prominence and markedness will again help students appreciate the complexity of

the translation and interpretation process, and gives them tools to better understand the

author's meaning.

Ideology and Cultural Bias Issues

The article "Translation" by Stefano Arduini (12 pp., no pages in the text), mentioned

above as a helpful overview of the main subject areas in translation studies, also digs a

little deeper into key areas of the proposed Kuyper College curriculum, particularly the

part about ideological or cultural bias issues causing problems or misunderstandings in

translation. On the subject of postcolonialism and "asymmetrical" relationships between

cultural entities, and how that affects translation, Arduini writes,

> For [Tejaswini] Niranjana translation is one of the most important fields of
> study for scholars who want to understand how relationships between

---

[179] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 170-171.
[180] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 170.
[181] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 197.
[182] Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 174-175.

cultures are established on the basis of a series of asymmetries. Every culture is the bearer of a whole inventory of implicit values that constitute its ideology. These values are present in the process of translation.[183]

He explains that translation is something that "changes the surrounding environment"[184] because not only does it make something new, it also inevitably changes the old. His point is that there will inevitably be some loss or change of meaning when translating a text from one fluid, unstable, hybrid-culture to another, and the cultural lenses of the translators will shape it.

Susan Bassnett, in the preface to her book *Translation Studies*, adds her voice to growing chorus of scholars such as Arduini who call for continued attention to the role that culture and bias plays in Translation Studies. She writes, "Translation is not just the transfer of texts from one language into another," but also "a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures" navigated by the translator.[185] She welcomes the recent consideration of "the inequality of the translation relationship" and underlines the importance of studies that look at translation as "an instrument of colonial domination,"[186] and studies that consider the powerful role of the translator or other powerful players in the translation process who may, e.g., perpetuate cultural stereotypes that exist in the target culture. She also cites the recent work in Gender Studies and translation as one area of growing interest.[187]

---

[183] Arduini, "Translation," 7.
[184] Arduini, "Translation," 10.
[185] Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 6.
[186] Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 4.
[187] Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 4-5, 9.

Philip Noss, in the introduction to the book he edited, *A History of Bible Translation,*[188] references three predominant ideological issues in recent history that could be used as points of discussion in a unit on Bible translation:

> (1) how to render "the Jews" in John's Gospel, (2) how to accommodate feminist calls for inclusive language in the context of the Bible's frequently masculine expression, and (3), how to represent concerns regarding the treatment of Africa and blackness in most European translation of the Bible.[189]

He adds that these kinds of ideological issues "can have extremely divisive effects, ranging from the rejection of a translation to the point, even today, of demonizing a translation" if that translation does not meet the ideological requirements of a certain group.[190] Noss here substantiates the need for future ministry leaders to be able to deal with these kinds of issues, so this can be used as a quote to help students realize the need to grapple with these as they prepare for their future roles in ministry.

Paul Ellingworth gives an example of bias in the history of Bible translation in his chapter entitled "From Martin Luther to the Revised English Version" in *A History of Bible Translation,*[191] in which he discusses the feud over word choices that reflected doctrinal divisions in the church. Ellingworth discusses the rise in interest in the original languages of the Bible in the late Renaissance (coinciding with a resurgence of interest in Greek literature) that drew attention to the original language documents and to

---

[188] Philip A. Noss, *History of Bible Translation*. vol. 1, *A History of Bible Translation*. (Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007).
[189] Noss, *A History of Bible Translation*, 20.
[190] Noss, *A History of Bible Translation*, 20.
[191] Paul Ellingworth, "From Martin Luther to the Revised English Version," in *History of Bible Translation*, vol. 1, *A History of Bible Translation*, ed. Philip A. Noss (Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007).

translations of them during the Reformation period[192] —evidenced by Erasmus's best-selling Greek New Testament in 1516.[193] Controversies over translation were not so much about methods, the author notes, but rather about specific religious words that changed the connotation of the passages, such as the rendering of "*ekklesia*" as "congregation" rather than "church."[194] And so Martin Luther's German translation of the Bible, based on Erasmus's Greek edition, "had an almost immediate effect in countries beyond the (still undefined) borders of Germany itself," Ellingworth writes. He continues, "The Catholic reaction took different forms in different countries. For example, in Spain it led to an almost total ban on production of Scriptures in the vernacular."[195] The examples in this chapter can be used to show how translation controversies are not new, and to give students perspective on how various biases can affect Bible translations.

In *A History of Bible Translation*, Daud Soesilo devotes a portion of his chapter "Bible Translation in Asia-Pacific and the Americas" to debates over the translation of divine names.[196] He gives several examples of past debates over divine names, and to the cultural gaps that needed to be considered in the translation process. He notes that in various African contexts, groups that used indigenous names for God had better growth, engagement and stability than those that borrowed foreign words for God.[197] The debate about God-language in China over using *shen* (highest class of gods; works as a plural) versus *shangdi* (personal name, creator of all things) ended up leading to two different

---

[192] Ellingworth, *From Martin Luther*, 107.
[193] Ellingworth, *From Martin Luther*, 110.
[194] Ellingworth, *From Martin Luther*, 109.
[195] Ellingworth, *From Martin Luther*, 109.
[196] Daud Soesilo, "Bible Translation in Asia-Pacific and the Americas," in *History of Bible Translation*, vol. 1, *A History of Bible Translation*, ed. Philip A. Noss (Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007), 176-181.
[197] Soesilo, "Bible Translation," 176.

versions, both of which are now established translations.[198] The Korean Bible has a

similar story of divided loyalty, although one finally won out. Soesilo views the rejection

of the use of "Allah" for God in translations because of its linkage to Muslim usage as an

unfortunate case of certain Christian groups using translation to justify their ideology.[199]

A portion of his concluding statement would be a great quote and launching point for in-

class discussions:

> Indeed, Bible translation into indigenous languages is the very
> manifestation of the mission of the church. Just as Jesus Christ, the living
> Word of God, became a human being and lived with the people he served,
> the written Word has been translated for the peoples in a fully human
> context both linguistically and culturally. Thus, in a sense Bible
> translation is always the re-enactment of the incarnation. Not only do
> people read, understand, and respond to the biblical communication from
> their cultural perspectives, God's living Word engages, judges, and
> transforms the cultures, lives and destiny of the readers.[200]

Another benefit of using these examples in the classroom is that they internationalize the

discussion, which benefits North American students who tend to be English-centric; the

many international students from these regions of the world who take this class would

benefit from knowing what kinds of issues have been addressed in these major world

language groups.

Mojola and Wendland also consider bias issues in a section titled "Post-Colonial

Approaches" from their article "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation

Studies."[201] What can be gleaned here for lecture material are the "power" categories they

consider; they wrestle with how translations and/or certain translation choices are linked

with power groups who want to maintain that power, are linked with entire macro-

---

[198] Soesilo, "Bible Translation," 177-178.
[199] Soesilo, "Bible Translation," 180.
[200] Soesilo, "Bible Translation," 181.
[201] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 22ff.

political systems that promote the well-being of the "empire," are linked with indoctrination issues, and linked with hybridization of cultures or languages that can happen as a result of translation.[202]

Another influential book dealing with ideological issues is R.S. Sugirtharajah's *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation,*[203] which forces the reader to consider the devastating effects of colonialism on so many peoples and cultures, and how Bible translation endeavors were part and parcel of colonialists' efforts to exert power over the locals. He writes that postcolonial criticism has helped to reveal the inequality of cultural representation and has helped many scrutinize the tendency of some to legitimatize power structures that are advantageous or promote values and interests of the people in power.[204] The movement has shown that "Bible translation has long been implicated in diverse imperialist projects" in various countries,[205] and at the core was the fact that Bible translators and other missionaries were often not respectful of the culture, the people, and the language of the people they came to serve. He writes of missionaries, e.g., attempting to "standardize and unify" the various dialects in different regions.[206] Also, some missionaries taught that the English language was the proper language to convey certain biblical ideas,[207] and claimed that the territorial expansion of the imperial nations was "the fulfillment of biblical expectation."[208] These were gross misuses of the Bible and a travesty against all those who endured that kind of humiliation and worse. Sugirtharajah shows how many in the colonial countries still see the Bible as "an ambivalent and unsafe

---

[202] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation,"22.
[203] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[204] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 79.
[205] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 156.
[206] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 158.
[207] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 135.
[208] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 1.

text" in that "it endorses both freedom and enslavement."[209] He points out others

instances, too, where translation was used as a tool to help change/realign doctrinal

stances. For example, Tyndale's translation "denied the papacy its favourite proof-text"

in Matthew 16:18 by translating *ekklesia* as "congregation" instead of "church."[210] The

translation also showed blatant disapproval of medieval customs by rendering *eidolatres*

as "worshipper of images" instead of "idolater."[211] The various statements and examples

above that come from this book will be used to demonstrate how ideological issues have

affected or intersected with Bible translation.

Overview of Literature for Assigned Readings

Dave Brunn's book *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created*

Equal?[212] asserts that the disagreements and discord among Christians around translation

issues is due to an oversimplified view held by many people of both language as well as

translation.[213] He gives just enough theory to help the readers see the impossibility of

strict word-for-word equivalence, and then he uses many examples from English

translations throughout history to show how translators have never been able to make a

neat and tidy transfer from the original text. He goes to great lengths to show how even

those translations that most English-language Christians would consider literal are not so

very literal after all.   The book is a great choice for the curriculum because it not only

deals with translation issues and theory, its aim is to promote unity around translation

---

[209] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 119.
[210] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 164.
[211] R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 164.
[212] Dave Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013).
[213] Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions*, 133-135.

issues, which is one of the goals of the curriculum for Kuyper College students, too. Brunn also brings a non-Indo-European language into the discussion, which allows students to get a glimpse of the even greater difficulties in translating the Bible in various parts of the world.

How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions[214] is also a good introduction to translation issues for a student at an undergraduate level. In section one, the authors introduce the readers to the concept of translation in general, and then focus in on issues of accuracy, clarity, naturalness, and audience-appropriateness. In section two, the authors cover lexical semantics, the concept of "approximation," the importance of context for meaning, the changing nature of language, and also point out the difficulty of translating metaphors, idioms, and other literary forms or devices. Section three helps the readers see how translators try to cross the cultural gaps in word meaning and cultural customs. The authors also discuss a couple of recent difficulties or controversies in the English Bible translation world, such as "Jews" vs. "Jewish leaders," and spend an entire chapter on gender issues. Part four is an introduction to textual criticism, and brings in the topic of the Septuagint, the Majority text and the KJV. Part five focuses on the history of English translation up to the modern era, and lays out the differences in their approaches to translation.   This book will be a great starting point for the rest of the curriculum, as it gives enough information to lay the foundation for further probing and discussion in class. One of its virtues is the overview of textual criticism which will lay the groundwork for lecture and discussion around "starting text" issues. Another positive is that the authors use many examples from both

---

[214] Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2013).

the Old and New Testament, and the bountiful New Testament Greek references will resonate with the students in this advanced Greek class. The authors also use clear, accessible, non-hype language in their discussion of gender issues, and they give many examples to demonstrate the accuracy of recent trends. Two other aspects that will help guide students toward the outcomes: the continual refrain about the positives of most translations, and the acknowledgement of how difficult translation can be, yet how enriching translations are, too. They write about translation, "Something is lost, but something else is gained,"[215] an idea that may be a great final discussion topic for this unit on Bible translation.

The article "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators"[216] is the third and final reading for this unit. This ten-page article written by Roy E. Ciampa brings together multiple topics of the planned curriculum, and it helps answer the students' "why does any of this matter?" question. Ciampa considers how ideology and power have played a role in translation throughout history, and he references certain translators associated with confessional traditions who made translation choices to shore up their viewpoints.[217] He also mentions several ways that the Bible and certain translations and interpretations have been used by people to exert power and oppression over others, e.g., during the crusades, as part of the inquisitions, and as a defense of slavery, anti-Semitism, and abuse of women and children. He explains that part of the problem stems from acceptance of the notion of "direct transferability" which is "the idea that readers of Bible translations should feel that the Bible (and God, through the Bible) directly addresses them in their

---

[215] Fee and Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation*, Kindle location 861.
[216] Roy E. Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators." *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 28, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 139-148.
[217] Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 140-141.

particular circumstances."[218] He gives examples of how the misconstrued mapping of identities throughout history—due to different cognitive environments in the original situation versus the translation situation—has led to misunderstanding around concepts like master, slave, husbands, wives, the Jews, and homosexuals, which then opened the door to abuse by those in power.[219] This article would work well for the undergraduate student because Ciampa brings in various aspects of the translation process in an accessible way: who translates and for whom, what parts are prioritized, why the translation is being done, how the translating is being done, and who holds the power on the decisions. The article is a good complement to the other required reading because it pushes the student far more than the other texts to consider the serious ramifications of poor translation and interpretation. Students would rather not think about how the Bible has been used as a weapon; they want to think that it has only ever had positive effects in the world. This article forces them to take an honest look at the ways the Bible can be misused and harm others.

---

[218] Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 141.
[219] Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 142-145.

CHAPTER 4:

PROJECT DESIGN:

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND RATIONALE, CURRICULUM DESIGN,

AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Introduction

This chapter details the goals, content, and assessment strategy of the translation

studies curriculum implemented at Kuyper College with the eleven students enrolled in

the Advanced Greek class during the winter semester of 2016. The research question for

this project is this: To what extent does the revised Kuyper College Greek language

curriculum help inform and equip students to understand and thoughtfully engage

complex issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely

occur in their ministry? The goal of this curriculum is to help men and women who are

preparing for ministry to understand the complexities of the nature of the Bible, such as

its oral history, its reflection of the character of God, and its fundamental translatability,

as well as begin to see various complexities of Bible translation, such as textual critical

issues and implications from communication theory, in order to be better prepared to

counsel and educate church leaders and laity about translation issues which, while having

the potential to edify the church body, have instead repeatedly become a source of

divisiveness and discord in the church. This project entails incorporating principles from

Translation Studies into the second-year New Testament Greek curriculum and then

studying the effects of the curriculum on students' knowledge of Bible translation issues,

attitudes towards the Bible and translation issues, as well as on students' preparedness to deal with any of these issues in ministry.

The curriculum was developed to address these goals, as well as to align with the educational goals of Kuyper College. How those educational goals of the College merge with this ministry need is more fully explained in chapter one, as is the documentation of translation-related problems and issues that occur in contemporary ministry settings. While chapter one connects this project's curriculum goals to multiple statements and educational goals outlined in the various documents of Kuyper College, the official Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) that are most directly connected with this curriculum are SLO 1.3, [The student will] "Apply biblical principles to intellectual, ethical, spiritual, and social issues," SLO 2.3, [The student will] "Demonstrate awareness of the variety of social, economic, religious, and cultural factors that affect current local and global issues," and SLO 5.3, [The student will] "Demonstrate the professional skills of the chosen vocation."[1] Results of this study are summarized in chapter five and the conclusions were made available for the college-wide assessment.

This research methodology was approved by Dr. Bryan Auday, research professor at Gordon College, as a non-experiment design, appropriate for doctoral research in the author's professional setting at Kuyper College. This study qualifies as "minimal risk"[2] since the discomfort anticipated would not be more than that encountered in a typical Kuyper College class that wrestles with issues of theology and has routine assignments, tests, and discussions. The project was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Kuyper College; in fact, the author has been encouraged to resubmit the request

---

[1] *Kuyper College Catalog,* 2016-2017, 6.
[2] See the document for "protecting human subject participants" available through the NIH, https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/PHRP.pdf, p. 64.

annually in order to continue to collect data on the effects of the curriculum. The IRB of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary also approved the project.

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first section lists and explains three Student Learning Outcomes for this curriculum which are being assessed, and which align with the ministry need, the research question, and also with the goals of Kuyper College. The second section describes the educational strategy as well as the various elements of the curriculum in some detail, and concludes with an explanation of how the curriculum pieces connect to the three SLOs. The third section explores the research tools utilized for assessment of the three SLOs to ascertain whether students do in fact demonstrate competency to thoughtfully engage issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that may come up in ministry.

Explanation of the Three Student Learning Outcomes

This project entails designing and implementing a curriculum that informs students as well as brings contemporary situations into the discussion square so that students can wrestle with how to approach translation-related discussions and be prepared to thoughtfully handle issues when they occur. The goal is to equip them so that in their regular tasks of leading, teaching, and interacting with parishioners, they show understanding of translation issues, as well as sensitivity toward those holding various viewpoints. The hope is that students learn to approach these issues in a way that reveals the resilience and flexibility of the Bible, and in a way that does not drive away parishioners or cause divisions, more confusion, or profound uncertainty in their churches. These goals are represented in the SLOs, the first of which is centered on

117

knowledge, the second on attitude, and the third on skill. Together they aim toward

competency to address translation-related issues in ministry, and thus connect also with

the overarching research question.

Student Learning Outcome 1

The key "knowledge" goal is represented by SLO 1: Students will demonstrate

proficiency in knowledge of key concepts from the translation studies curriculum.

Why SLO 1: In order to address the issues laid out in chapter one regarding the

need to competently handle translation issues in a contemporary ministry context,

students need to demonstrate that they have a basic understanding of the concepts and

ideas being presented throughout the curriculum. The curriculum's introduction to

history, theories, approaches, and terms is connected to contemporary ministry needs,

needs that were determined through anecdotal evidence as well as others' published

discussions about them (see chapter 1). This foundational aspect of the curriculum

provides the student with crucial background information related to these contemporary

issues in ministry settings. The readings, lectures, and interactive discussions on Bible

translation-related concepts lay the framework for students as they also begin to consider

how to handle these issues in their leadership settings. Thus while the curriculum pieces

include periodic references to contemporary problems and current discussions in ministry

settings related to Bible translation, the curriculum topics also reach well beyond the

contemporary conflicts in order to introduce students to a broad spectrum of underlying

concepts that can help them more fully understand the breadth and depth of the issues.

Therefore topics like textual criticism, communication theory, and the role of ideology in

translation are key elements of the curriculum; these and other elements are explained more fully below. With this introduction to the many factors involved in translation, students gain a good understanding of a broad spectrum of translation-related issues, and thus also gain the foundation necessary for engaging knowledgeably in discussions with those who are asking the kinds of Bible and translation questions that are common in ministry settings.

Because SLO 1 encompasses the foundational elements across the whole translation studies unit, it is subdivided to measure competency in four broad knowledge categories.

1.1 Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of starting text issues.

1.2 Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of general approaches to translation.

1.3 Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of the complexities of communication.

1.4 Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of how ideology affects translation.

Assessment of SLO 1 clearly feeds into the institution's SLO 2.3 (see above), as well as helps answer the research question, "To what extent does the revised Kuyper College Greek language curriculum help inform and equip students to understand and thoughtfully engage the complex issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely occur in their ministry?

Assessment of SLO 1 is accomplished using data from multiple sources: twenty-three terms and definitions from the objective portion of a test, three essays from a test,

analysis of the focus group conversation, and four statements about knowledge of certain concepts from the pretest-posttest anonymous Likert scale survey. (These assessment tools are more fully explained below.) Each data piece is aligned with one of the sub-points of SLO 1. The author utilizes a 4-point holistic rubric that incorporates descriptions of levels of performance (see appendix E); a 4-point assessment grid is used in order to match the 4-point assessment grid utilized for Program Learning Outcomes at Kuyper College. For this research project, assessment is done of every artifact for each student. It is compiled for final assessment as "____/____ students demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of key concepts from the translation studies curriculum."

Student Learning Outcome 2

The key "attitudes" goal is represented by SLO 2: Students will display openness toward a wide range of Bible translations and translation options.

Why SLO 2: The study of the huge number of factors that affect the translation process should result in the students' realization that translation is a complex endeavor that inevitably results in a multiplicity of acceptable outcomes. Thus SLO 2 builds on SLO 1. When students recognize the myriad of factors that can and do affect translation, they potentially begin to value and gain respect for other views of and opinions about various Bible translation options, and become less judgmental toward those who hold views that do not match their own. This revision in (or corroboration of) outlook is foundational in preparing church leaders to develop a perspective that is hospitable to those who hold the variety of opinions that will inevitably exist in a ministry setting. The call from Dave Brunn and David Neff for church leaders and members to maintain unity

in the church amid translation debates (see chapter one) is of course not assessable in the classroom setting, but the students' development toward openness to the possibility of multiple translation options would indicate growth in hospitality and humility that may help that cause, since as leaders, that openness will become evident for all to see and imitate. As for measuring the results of the research question, "To what extent does the revised Kuyper College Greek language curriculum help inform and equip students to engage issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely occur in their ministry?," the assessment results of SLO 2 shed light particularly on how the curriculum helps "equip" or prepare students in a very foundational way—by affecting students' attitudes toward Bible translation options, which can in turn affect others around them who look to them for leadership and guidance.

This outcome is assessed using a 4-point holistic rubric based on information gathered from multiple sources: a translation assignment, test essays, analysis of the focus group conversation, nine statements that illuminate attitudes toward translation options from the before-after anonymous Likert scale survey, and four open-ended, qualitative questions on that same survey. Assessment is done of every data piece for each student, resulting in two different sets of numbers: one from the identifiable data stream, and the other from the anonymous Likert scale survey data. The themes the author is looking for include students' acknowledgement of the complexity and nuances of translation, and concrete examples of students respecting multiple translation options. The data is compiled for final assessment as "____/____ students display openness toward a wide range of Bible translations and translation options."

Student Learning Outcome 3

The key "skill" goal is represented by SLO 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to respond to translation questions or conflicts knowledgeably and with respect.

Why SLO 3: The well-being of any given church is by no means solely controlled by its leaders, but on the other hand, leaders who demonstrate thoughtful interactions, exhibit concern for inquirers, and promote civil discussions can have a unifying effect among communities engaged in Bible translation discussions. In preparing students for a leadership role in possible conflicts, including people proclaiming, "my opinion is right, and that person is wrong," students must demonstrate that they have the vocabulary and knowledge to help navigate discussions, and interact in ways that show civility and sensitivity to individuals' preferences for, attachment to, and queries about certain translations, without denigration or unnecessary disparaging comments. This kind of interaction by church leaders is a way to demonstrate to parishioners the trustworthiness, resilience, and flexibility of the Bible for translation, and a reminder of the importance of a unified witness even while working through disagreements. As for measuring the results of the research question, "To what extent does the revised Kuyper College Greek language curriculum help inform and equip students to understand and thoughtfully engage the complex issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely occur in their ministry?," assessment of SLO 3 clearly sheds light on how the curriculum helps "equip" or prepare students to deal with these issues as leaders in the church.

SLO 3 is assessed using a 4-point holistic rubric based on information collected from answers to two essays on a test, and from analysis of the focus group discussion.

The Likert scale survey is not used to assess SLO 3. The themes that the author is looking for include demonstration of respectful, thoughtful interaction, use of accurate information, and indications of caution, humility, sensitivity, and hospitality. The data is compiled for final assessment as "____/____ students demonstrate the ability to respond to translation questions or conflicts knowledgeably and with respect.

Conclusion

The assessment of these three SLOs together will demonstrate to what extent the translation studies curriculum is able to inform and equip students to thoughtfully engage these issues in the church. Final assessment of SLO 1 will reveal whether students are able to grasp and articulate the concepts presented through homework and during class time which help them more fully understand the process and complexity of Bible translation, and engage the issues with the background knowledge necessary to answer questions and lead discussions on translated-related issues. Final assessment of SLO 2 will reveal students' level of hospitality and openness to a variety of translation options, based on their understanding of the complexity of translation. Final assessment of SLO 3 will reveal whether students demonstrate readiness to interact respectfully and knowledgeably with others, and engage the issues in a way that assuages fear and promotes unity in the church, even while working through disagreements.

Explanation of the Educational Strategy and Elements of the Curriculum

Educational strategy

The elements of the curriculum, including lecture, homework readings, in-class videos, exercises and discussions, along with the translation assignment and test, are designed to address the three Student Learning Outcomes, and thus address the research question. The content of the curriculum unit was developed using an array of resources from the arena of Bible translation as well as that of general Translation Studies; these resources are discussed in detail in chapter three. Assessment of learning involves using a holistic rubric aligned with the three SLOs for four artifacts: a test, a translation assignment, an anonymous survey, and a focus group gathering with participating students, all of which are more fully explained in section three of this chapter.

Competing against the desire of the author to explore a multitude of potential topics with students is the unavoidable constraint of time. Because Greek 204 has other Student Learning Outcomes outside of the three listed above, the time frame for the curriculum is limited to about half of the semester. A well-known educator in Bible translation studies, Esteban Voth, advised the author that this amount of time is sufficient, and the goal would be to limit the topics and depth of each topic in order to avoid overwhelming the student, since, in his experience, some students find Translation Studies topics unsettling, and need time to process the content.[3] The approach undertaken at Kuyper College is that of introducing a limited number of topics that fall under the rubric of "Translation Studies," with assigned readings for background, and then in-class overviews and brief exploration of various subtopics. The overall trajectory of the topics in the curriculum is guided by an article written by Roy Ciampa in which he

---

[3] Interview with Esteban Voth, May 23, 2014, in Misano Adriatico, Italy. See also chapter one.

gives a succinct overview of multiple factors that affect the translation process.[4] (See

chapter three for a summary of that article.)

One factor under consideration in the design and implementation of the

curriculum includes the educational history of the students who enroll in this class, the

vast majority of whom are college seniors, and who have thus either completed or nearly

completed their required thirty credits of Bible and Theology by the time they begin the

class. All students in Greek 204 will also have studied a minimum of eight credits of

New Testament Greek. The students who come into Greek 204, then, have been exposed

to many related subjects, including biblical interpretation methods, the doctrine of

inspiration of Scripture, Bible genre studies, and sermon writing. They have also taken

an Introduction to Missions class that introduced them to issues of power and ideology in

the spreading of the Christianity around the world (e.g., colonialism, slavery, etc.)

Additionally, they have completed many hours of translation work from Greek to

English. Thus, the instructor is able to build on prior knowledge and draw connections

between that familiar material and the new material.

In the implementation of the curriculum, the instructor utilizes various tools and

approaches to learning that are congruent with contemporary discussions in the field of

education. These tools include provision of background readings and also lecture for

baseline transmission of information that introduces various concepts pertinent to the

final outcomes. Since this a senior-level class, the author did not incorporate reading

"checks" like written responses or quizzes, but had pointed discussions about content.

Other in-class tools and methods that require active engagement from students include

---

[4] Roy E. Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches to Bible Translation: Origins, Characteristics, and Issues."
Lusófona [University in Lisbon, Portugal] Journal of the Science of Religion)   Monograph Series, 6;
Lisbon: Edições Universitárias Lusófonas & Sociedade Bíblica, (2010): 59-101.

exercises and discussions around topics and questions that are aimed at helping students process the base content. In fact, every class assembly during the unit incorporates situational learning, as the topics are framed using ministry questions, and ministry scenarios based on actual incidents in the broader church are also integrated throughout. Active learning is also evident in students' application of learned concepts in a graded, individualized translation project for each student, as well as in their written, graded responses to ministry scenarios on the test. The point of using a variety of approaches is that it allows the student to first learn about the concepts, then process and begin to own the material as they practice thoughtful interaction orally (during class discussion, which is not assessed.) At the conclusion of the curriculum, then, students are required to show their skill level in written form and orally (more on this below) in order to enter ministry better prepared to engage the issues in a competent way.

Another educational approach used throughout the curriculum is the introduction of ideas that would likely cause students to experience some level of cognitive dissonance; in other words, students are presented with information that may conflict or appear to conflict with prior belief. This incentivizes students to actively engage with the material as they process the arguments and strive to resolve the tension. For example, right at the start of the curriculum, the students, who typically have a hard time shedding a mechanistic, rigid view of the Bible, are confronted with details about the nature and history of the Bible which force them to face preconceived notions about a rigid text of the Bible. As the curriculum progresses, the students will continue to be challenged to consider the multiple factors that affect every Bible translation, and be challenged by the assertion that no translation is a complete transfer. The students enrolled in Greek 204

have some knowledge of the complexity of translation from their own struggles to translate and interpret New Testament passages, but they have not previously been presented with the breadth and depth explored in this curriculum. In fact, by the time they reach 204, most students are often in "default" mode in their translation work and give a straightforward, wooden rendition of their assigned passages without much thought. The curriculum brings the students on a dialogic journey during which they wrestle with issues like the translatability and the incredible flexibility of the biblical text, while also trying to align those realities with the high view of Scripture that Kuyper College upholds and that students also typically hold.

While utilizing the inevitable cognitive dissonance that stems from the nature of the material and encourages deep analytical thinking, the author also aims to regularly lead students down a path toward resolution—or toward acceptance of the mystery demanded in the Christian's journey—by utilizing another educational approach: modeling for students how to embrace the tensions, and how to patiently, thoughtfully, and cautiously come to terms with ideas that may on the surface seem incongruent. The goal is to give students an environment where they can witness, for example, what it looks like to give thoughtful, honest inquiry about origins of the Bible, however disconcerting that may be, and concurrently witness evidence of a high view of scripture that is a core value of the college and all instructors. They must be assured via in-class dialogue that it is possible for Christians to accept both the utter complexity of and difficulty of translating and interpreting the Bible, as well as accept the clarity of its overall message. The students should witness how to uphold the doctrine of inspiration, even while exploring the Bible's complicated textual criticism issues. By observing

someone else acknowledge that the Bible is flexible enough to be rendered across language and cultural boundaries—and still be the word of God, just as it is in its various original languages—then the students potentially begin to learn how to themselves uphold the tension that translations are the word of God, but also the coexistent truth that there is no such thing as 100% equivalence from one language to the next. Even while highlighting the complexity and flexibility of the Bible, and embracing the unsettling truth that some things are gained, and some things are lost in every translation, the lecture and discussion material also continually stresses the authority of Scripture, even in translation, and stresses God as the ultimate author of the Bible. The discussion times also allow the students to process out loud, in the safe space of the classroom, how to resolve what may at first seem discordant truths and thus helps them solidify a thoughtful approach to addressing these issues in their ministry settings. The modeling also includes efforts on the part of the instructor to avoid judgmental pronouncements about various translations and show hospitality towards various viewpoints, again demonstrating to students that the things learned about complexity and flexibility of scripture must affect interactions with others.

In developing the curriculum on Bible translation, this researcher worked to avoid making it a mere comparison of various English Bible translations. While English translations of the Bible are utilized throughout the curriculum, this is always for the purposes of illustrating underlying concepts. Organizing the curriculum around English versions of the Bible would not effectively emphasize the complexities that are part and parcel of translation, which is one of the goals of the curriculum. Students need to gain a rich understanding of why there are differences or why changes are made, as well as

deeper insights into current debates. An additional factor in creating something other than a mere overview of English Bible translation issues is that international students regularly enroll in the Greek sequence at Kuyper College, and these students would be better served by an introduction to the various principles undergirding all translations so that discussions can intersect with the issues in their own international settings. Also, some students in Greek 204 have contemplated international Bible translation as a possible vocation, so providing a curriculum that is applicable to the full spectrum of world languages and Bible translation is a priority.

Explanation of the curriculum

The following paragraphs give more detail about the homework requirements for students, as well as an overview of the topics that are covered in class through lecture, video, discussion, and exercises. The PowerPoint that guides the in-class material can be found in appendix F.   The elements of the curriculum that are used for assessment purposes are explained in more detail in section three of this chapter.

Reading homework: The reading homework includes major portions of two books and one article, each one explained in the paragraphs below. The students are simultaneously working on their research project for their particular New Testament passage, so the reading needs to be somewhat limited. The readings are for background information, and set up lecture and discussion material for class time. Discussion topics related to the readings are noted in the PowerPoint presentation. While there is no direct assessment of student engagement with the reading, the readings touch on every Student Learning Outcome, and thus prepare the student to engage with the curriculum topics in

their journey toward competency to thoughtfully engage Bible translation issues in ministry.

Dave Brunn's book *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?*[5] was chosen because it touches on underlying concepts of translation, introduces multiple translations, and emphasizes the call for unity in the church around translation issues. The book was a natural fit for the purposes of the project as it overlapped with the author's own experiences, and had in fact cemented the author's desire to incorporate this Translation Studies curriculum and conduct this research project with Kuyper College students. Brunn gives just enough theory to help make his points, so that the students are briefly introduced to the questions and issues that they will be learning about and wrestling with in more detail during class time. He asserts that the disagreements and discord among Christians around translation issues are due to an oversimplified view held by many people of both language as well as translation.[6] One of Brunn's goals is to illustrate that even so-called "word-for-word" translations often veer from that approach because of the nature of language and communication. He lays out his preferred vocabulary for these discussions, which is then also promoted in class sessions: "word-focused" or "modified literal,"[7] and "meaning-based" or "idiomatic."[8] Brunn's overarching goal is to diminish debates by demonstrating that dissimilar Bible versions are "mutually complementary—even mutually dependent,"[9] a goal that closely aligns with SLO 2. Brunn also brings a non-Indo-European language into the discussion, which

---

[5] Dave Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013).
[6] Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions*, 134.
[7] Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions*, 130-131.
[8] Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions,* 131-132.
[9] Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions,* 17.

allows all students to get a glimpse of the great difficulties in translating the Bible around the world, and allows international students to consider how the various issues play out in a non-English setting.

The second book, *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions*[10] by Gordon Fee and Mark Strauss gives helpful material on the topics of starting text, ideology and culture, and communication issues in Bible translation. It also reviews a few topics that students have discussed previously in other classes (including Greek class) such as the role of literary devices in communication, the importance of context for translation and interpretation, and the need for translators and interpreters to consider cultural gaps. Along the way, the authors introduce lexical semantics, the concept of "approximation," and the changing nature of language. The authors also give examples of recent controversies in the English Bible translation world, such as the translation of "Jews" versus "Jewish leaders," the debates over the use of the KJV, and also gendered language issues, which the authors explain in a direct, systematic way, giving several examples to demonstrate the accuracy of recent English-language trends.[11] Other aspects of this book that can help guide students toward the Student Learning Outcomes include the following: the continual refrain about the positives of most translations, the acknowledgement of how difficult translation can be, and the idea that multiple translations are wonderfully enriching.

---

[10] Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2013).
[11] Fee and Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation.*

The third reading is the article "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators" by Roy Ciampa,[12] which brings together multiple topics of the planned curriculum, and in particular helps the students consider how ideology and power have played a role in translation throughout history. For example, Ciampa references certain translators who made translation choices to shore up their own viewpoints.[13] He also mentions several ways that certain Bible translations and interpretations have been used as a tool of oppression over others, e.g., during the crusades, as part of the inquisitions, and as a defense of slavery, anti-Semitism, and abuse of women and children. He explains that part of the problem stems from acceptance of the notion of "direct transferability" which is "the idea that readers of Bible translations should feel that the Bible (and God, through the Bible) directly addresses them in their particular circumstances."[14] He gives examples of how the misconstrued mapping of identities throughout history—due to different cognitive environments in the original situation versus the translation situation—has led to misunderstanding around concepts like master, slave, husbands, wives, the Jews, and homosexuals, which then opened the door to abuse by those in power.[15] This article brings in various aspects of the translation process in an accessible way: who translates and for whom, what parts are prioritized, why the translation is being done, how the translating is being done, and who holds the power on the decisions. The article is a good complement to the other required reading because it helps the students see the need for church leaders to understand the issues involved in translation so that they are prepared to

---

[12] Roy E. Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators." International Journal of Frontier Missiology 28, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 139-148.
[13] Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 140-141.
[14] Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 141.
[15] Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 142-145.

explain how a translation might be misunderstood because of cultural issues, or how the Bible and certain translations have been misused and even harmed others.

While the majority of the reading homework aims at the knowledge-centered SLO 1—an outcome entirely foundational to the other two—the readings also aim at SLO 2 and SLO 3, since the authors of the books and article regularly address the complexity of translation, show openness to multiple translation options, and promote unity and hospitable conversations around translation issues. In conclusion, the reading homework aims at every point of the Student Learning Outcomes, and provides a rich backdrop for the other elements of the curriculum.

In-class material: The decision process about which specific topics to cover in class, the sequencing of those topics, and which exercises or examples to use in class was developed by reading broadly in the area of translation studies (see chapter three), and utilizing in particular Roy Ciampa's article, "Contemporary Approaches to Bible Translation: Origins, Characteristics, and Issues."[16] In some ways, the hardest part was deciding how to categorize and sequence the various elements under main headings, since many of the concepts overlap and could potentially connect to a variety of over-arching headings. The author strived to limit what may be new vocabulary for students, so did not take time to introduce certain terms such as "semiotics," "pragmatics," etc., even though they encompass the concepts being presented. Instead, the author used familiar terms as the main headings, and introduced a limited number of new vocabulary within each of the topics.

---

[16] Ciampa, "Contemporary Approaches."

The following is the sequential outline of in-class lecture, video, and discussion topics:

1. Introduction: translation issues in ministry, theology of and defense of translation of the Bible

2. The Starting Text: oral tradition, manuscript overview, the Septuagint, the KJV

3. Approaches to Translation: *skopos* theory, word-focused versus meaning-based/idiomatic continuum, translation form, foreignization and domestication

4. Complexities of Language and Communication: a) cognitive context, communication theory, relevance theory; b) literary issues, discourse analysis

5. Final remarks: ideology and translation: cultural and confessional bias, issues of power, the goal of unity in the church.

(1) Introduction: The introductory lecture begins with the question "Can we 'get' the word of God through a translation?" The introduction covers both a theology of Bible translation—a condensed version of the author's chapter two—and also introduces a variety of conflicts and discussions that are occurring in the church around Bible translation issues. A starting premise, presented on day one, is that the nature of Scripture, given from both the divine hand and the human hand in forms and words that humans understand, is meant to communicate, and is thus translatable into languages. Exploration of the theology of Bible translation hinged on the following four points, drawn from the author's work in chapter two: First, God reveals himself as a communicator. In the Bible God reveals his desire to be in relationship with humanity. Thus the Bible itself is the starting point for exploration of the value and usefulness of a

translated Bible, through which God communicates to all people. The framework also references the communicative act of Jesus Christ, who embodies the word of God. Second, three languages are used in the biblical text. The biblical writers reveal a communicative God who chooses to connect to the world through the natural abilities of speakers (oral tradition) and writers (the written tradition). Thus the variety of languages utilized in the text shows the importance of communicating in the language of the people. Third, translation is utilized within scripture itself. The inspired New Testament authors did not hesitate to write down a Greek translation of the words of Jesus, his disciples, and others, who primarily spoke Aramaic. New Testament writers also clearly utilized the Greek Septuagint translations of the Old Testament. Fourth, the Bible clearly reveals that the cosmic plan of God involves a diversity of people and languages. The lecture material explores how the multilingual and multicultural nature of the Bible sets the expectation of an abundance of ways for the story of redemption, reconciliation, and new life to be told, so that translation is in fact the expectation. This introductory material concludes by reiterating that the biblical text is a result of communicative acts given by the divine God through human hands in history, which was to be read and understood by people irrespective of their heart language, and so lays a foundation for meaningful and multiple translations of the text. By showing that the Bible is an intentional record of communication from the divine God to and through people, students better grasp the big picture of God's desire to communicate with all people his message of grace, love, and salvation through the biblical text.

The opening material also introduces a few of the particular issues that may come up in in various ministry settings (see chapter one as well as the lecture outline), and it

concludes with the broadest, most fundamental question that drives the sub-topics for most of the lecture material: "Why are there so many Bible translations?" Not only is this is a potential question of church members (or inquirers) about the array of options at the local Christian bookstore, it is an all-encompassing question that, by the time the student has looked at a variety of answers in the course of the curriculum, has led them to learn about textual critical issues, approaches and philosophies of translation, communication, language, literary issues, and ideology. Right from the start the lecture material offers a brief overview of the "answers," which is effectively an outline of the in-class lectures and discussion: Translators have <u>different starting points</u>: text variations. Translation teams have <u>different approaches or philosophies </u>that are geared for different audiences with different needs. Translators are dealing with <u>complexities of communication and language</u>. These shorthand answers give the students a sense of the direction for the following weeks. Note that the overview outline at this point does not include the final topic of "ideology;" the topics of bias and ideology come up occasionally throughout the curriculum, and then are used at the very end as a way to review and analyze the previous material, as well as to draw some overall conclusions.

(2) The Starting Text: Following the introductory material, the students are introduced to starting text issues. A discussion of textual criticism comes at the beginning since theoretically the work of textual criticism occurs before translation can begin. The lecture material begins with a brief discussion of oral traditions and the role of the ancient author,[17] which can be disconcerting for students, so this is a window into exploring God as the author of the oral tradition and its inevitable "translations" over

---

[17] John H. Walton and D Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2013), 17-28.

time, as well as God as the ultimate author of the written tradition. Most students have

not read extensively about manuscript traditions or starting text issues, although it is

mentioned briefly in a few other classes, including Biblical Interpretation and their

previous Greek classes. The presentation delves into the work of scribes and the writing

process, and introduces the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) and Septuagint issues.[18] The

curriculum also includes an introduction to text types, and the possible reasons there are

variations in various manuscripts. The author also briefly discusses the rules and

standards that guide scholars who work on the eclectic text of the New Testament. This

unit ends with lecture and discussion about one of the ministry topics that continues to

incite conversation in churches around the United States and other parts of the world: the

continued use of the King James Version. (See chapter one for more background about

conflicts and issues revolving around the KJV.) The KJV is included in this part of the

curriculum because encounters around the KJV mainly involve textual critical issues.

The students watch two videos—one extolling the faultlessness of the KJV, the other

giving a more negative assessment[19]—and then discuss how to have conversations about

the KJV without discrediting it and potentially causing a faith crisis for those who have

only ever read that version.

(3) Approaches to Translation. This unit launches with students learning a new

term, *Skopostheorie*, which is a concept from the field of Translation Studies that

promotes consideration of the purpose or function of the translated text, so that

translation decisions for the Bible, for example, would depend on whether its primary use

---

[18] Timothy Michael Law, *When God Spoke Greek: the Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[19] Links to those videos can be found in the PowerPoint slides, appendix F.

is for liturgical reading, devotional use, academic use, children's use, etc.[20] Class time

interaction with students includes exploration of issues connected to *Skopostheorie*,

including the establishment of a translation purpose statement or brief, a consideration of

motives, and a discussion about audience as well as various translation forms: written,

spoken, sign, graphic, etc. The unit also includes a time for dialogue about implications

of binary evaluations of Bible translation, like "good" and "bad." Through lecture as

well as conversation about Brunn's book, the students also explore the word-focused

versus meaning-based continuum; the conversation concludes with a consideration of the

potential positives as well as potential losses of the various approaches. This unit also

includes an introduction to the concepts of foreignization and domestication in

translation[21] with an international Bible translation example to illustrate how these

approaches affect translation decisions,[22] and also revisits the Septuagint to witness a

variety of approaches there. Throughout, the author references a wide range of English-

language versions of the Bible, including Eugene Peterson's The Message,[23] a version

that the students are always eager to discuss, since many of them have witnessed conflict

around its use.

  (4) Complexities of Language and Communication. This unit covers

communication theory, cognitive studies, relevance theory, and touches on discourse

analysis and literary considerations in communication. The main focus in this unit is to

give definitions and provide several examples of the slipperiness of language, and its

---

[20] Aloo Osotsi Mojola and Ernst Wendland, "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies" (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2002), 13ff.
[21] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 24ff.
[22] Nathan Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie in Bible Translation." *The Bible Translator* 64, no. 3 (2013): 300-323.
[23] Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message: the Bible in Contemporary Language*, (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002.)

dependence on context for meaning. These discussions break down the notion that language is rigid and machine-like, or that an exact equivalent exists from one language to another which can allow a translation to "contain" the exact meaning. The presentation includes remarks on frame semantics and considers the gaps between the cultural, contextual frames of its original communication setting with its composer(s)/recipient(s), and the cultural, contextual framework of today's recipients, including meaning affiliated with genre and other literary forms. The lecture material briefly introduces relevance theory, a proposal based on the understanding that meaning is inferred throughout a communication act, with the assumption that the sender is conveying relevant information in a shared cognitive environment.[24] This is used as background information as students weigh the potential gains and losses of explicating implicit information versus the possibility of wordiness or inaccuracy. This "complexities of language" unit incorporates a brief review of larger discourse issues for translation, including attention to elements of cohesion, coherence, and prominence, and attention to literary considerations. Since students are quite familiar with the literary issues from previous instruction in Greek and other classes, these topics are touched on only briefly. The statement "translation is never 100% transfer" is a recurring phrase in this unit, and the examples of contemporary church ministry conversations that are brought out in class to highlight the praxis goals are the "Son of God" and "Allah" discussions from recent international translation efforts (see chapter one). Gendered language issues are also used in this unit as an example of how cognitive context changes over time.

---

[24] Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 20.

(5) Final Remarks:

The final remarks in the translation studies curriculum revolve around Roy Ciampa's article, "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators," which touches on several issues brought up throughout the eight weeks, such as cognitive context and its connection to ideology and bias.[25] The unit brings out Ciampa's premise that cognitive "mapping" is automatic for readers because of their experiences, education, etc., and that since readers tend to be blind to their own maps, they inadvertently directly transfer concepts drawn from the ancient context to their own context.[26] The inclusion of this topic in the curriculum achieves a couple of things: First, it helps students become aware that, while a degree of cultural bias is inevitable, having some awareness of its existence is a crucial step in mitigating potentially negative effects. Second, it provides a necessary balance to the recurring curricular theme of hospitality toward translations, for while it is necessary to expand students' tolerance for the wide variety of acceptable translation options, the author also wants to caution against the notion that church leaders can ignore the potentially devastating consequences that can occur through points of mistranslation, or misuse and abuse of various translations.

The introduction of these five areas of study from the broader field of Translation Studies through homework readings and in-class encounters by no means makes the students translation experts, but gives them enough breadth and also detail to be able to converse intelligently and thoughtfully about translation matters in the church setting, and gives them the background that sets them on a journey to continue to learn about translation-related issues. The curriculum also helps students who may have become

[25] Roy E. Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators." *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 28, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 139-148.
[26] Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 141-142, 145-146.

comfortable with their own utilitarian translation method over the previous year of Greek to wrestle with the complexity of the translation task, to help them realize that a multiplicity of acceptable translation options is inevitable because of all the factors involved in the task of translation, and to help them realize that binary assessment categories like "good" versus "bad" are overly simplistic. The curriculum content thus clearly aims at SLO 1, the knowledge goal, and SLO 2, the attitudes goal.

Along the way, the curriculum unit helps students consider how, as church leaders, they can address Bible translation issues that arise in the church in a pastoral way, with the goal of promoting unity and avoiding painful divisions over translation issues. In other words, pieces of the curriculum force the students to consider and practice how they might assure people they meet in their ministry who deeply desire to know what the biblical text "really says" that they can indeed access the things that God is communicating, even in its various translated forms. The unit reinforces for the students the idea that the best way to handle translation-related questions and conflicts is to show respect and sensitivity toward people while answering questions, and to lead others in a way that demonstrates the value of multiple approaches to translation, and in a way that promotes unity. The curriculum thus clearly aims at SLO 3, the skills goal.

For a more detailed account of in-class lecture topics, see appendix F.

The Research Tools Used for Assessment

This section gives a more detailed explanation of the research approach, and explores the tools used for assessment of student learning. Dr. Bryan Auday, research professor at Gordon College, approved the research question and project methodology as

a non-experiment design, and noted that it could be conducted either as a one-group, after-only design, utilizing the assessment tools after the whole curriculum was completed to ascertain competence levels, or could be conducted as a one-group before/after design, utilizing certain assessment tools both before and after the implementation of the curriculum to get insights into changes in aptitudes or attitudes of the students. He noted that the one-group, before/after design would in fact be slightly more powerful since it may capture attitudinal changes toward the Bible and Bible translation issues. The author designed the research project using the latter alternative for one of the four research instruments. Based on Dr. Auday's recommendations, the complete research plan includes both quantitative and qualitative instruments to gather the data that is used to assess the SLOs and answer the research question; the quantitative data can help explain or enrich the qualitative data, and vice versa.

In order to ascertain whether students demonstrate whether they are prepared to thoughtfully engage translation-related issues in ministry, four different instruments are used to gather data during the eight weeks, including a test with both essay and objective sections, a translation exercise (which is part of larger research project), one focus group gathering, and a pretest-posttest anonymous Likert scale survey. Three of those instruments—the test, the translation assignment, and the focus group gathering—occur at the end of the curriculum; they either require grades or are done in-person and are thus not anonymous to the author. The author is then able to collate the data from those three streams for each individual participant, and to gather results from this identifiable data stream. The fourth instrument is an anonymous pretest-posttest survey (see below for reasons for anonymity) with a number code determined by each user in order to collate

data for individual students, giving the author the ability to track changes from pretest to posttest for each anonymous participant. Each student artifact from all four instruments is assessed using the holistic rubric to guide analysis of student proficiency levels for whichever of the three SLOs that artifact addresses.

The three non-anonymous instruments are explained below, followed by a full description of the fourth instrument, the anonymous Likert scale survey.

Test: The first assessment tool is a test, given after the completion of the rest of the curriculum, which contains both an objective portion as well as several essays. The objective portion is made up of two sections of matching that are aimed at SLO 1.1, SLO 1.2, and SLO 1.3. The "matching" includes a large pool of terms from which students must choose to best match a list of descriptions; some of the terms were unused. This objective section thus assess students' grasp of basic knowledge, as it requires that students recognize the concepts and definitions that underlie Translation Studies questions that may come up in a ministry setting. Essay questions, including translation-related scenarios requiring pointed responses, were also used because they allow the researcher to assess the ability of the student to use concepts and apply the information learned in the curriculum. Since the author wants students to memorize and rehearse for these real-life, praxis-oriented questions, the students are given a list of potential essays and "scenario" topics ahead of time, all of which have been addressed in class. The essay section of the test includes 6 questions, one aimed at SLO 1.3, one aimed at SLO 1.4, one aimed at SLO 2, and two aimed at SLO 3. A sixth essay is aimed at SLO 1 in a general way, so that various students could potentially raise or lower the rubric scores on sub-points of SLO 1, depending on what information they include, as well as how well or

poorly they use that information. And while the essays are crafted to require responses

that would match certain SLOs, the "scenario" responses by students aimed at SLO 3

should feed all three SLOs, since the responses will likely reveal insights into students'

knowledge and attitudes, along with their level of skill in dealing with translation issues.

Translation assignment: The second of the four assessment instruments is a

translation assignment which is connected to a larger research project on a New

Testament passage that the students have chosen themselves. Its final form is not due

until after the curriculum unit is complete. Their instructions are to write two English

translations of their passage, one that would fall in the "word-for-word" category, and the

other geared for a particular audience and need that they are free to determine, but with

the caveat that they not use a word-focused approach. The aim of this assignment is to

push students to wrestle with multiple approaches so that they gain an appreciation and

understanding for all, but especially to push them to consider how to translate toward

clarity of meaning and/or naturalness. This second translation is a new addition to this

standard assignment from previous years, and works well because the students are

already investing hours of research into their chosen passage, and thus have the depth of

knowledge and insights necessary to feel comfortable exploring various translation

options for their passage. This assignment informs SLO 2; the author is looking at the

second translation for evidence that the student shows openness to multiple translation

options by their own use of various options that go beyond a word-focused approach to

translation.

Focus Group: The third assessment tool is a focus group gathering, a qualitative

tool that gives students a final forum to self-assess their preparedness to lead various

populations in their churches through translation-related issues in a way that displays

knowledge, openness, and sensitivity. The focus group gathering also allows the author

to assess how the students display knowledge (SLO 1), attitudes (SLO 2), and readiness

to use the knowledge to engage others with sensitivity (SLO 3). In the focus group

gathering the students are encouraged to share ministry experiences, to express what part

of the curriculum was particularly meaningful to them and why, and to verbalize how

they feel the curriculum has equipped them in ways that the author did not anticipate.

The focus group session occurs in the class's regular time-slot, during the first scheduled

slot after the test. Immediately before the focus group starts, the students take the

anonymous survey for the second time. The session begins with a review of the informed

consent material, the purpose of the study, the procedure of the focus group, the risks and

benefits of participating in the study, and the high priority for confidentiality on the part

of the author. The approved focus group questions are the following, and the author is

allowed to follow up on items brought up by the students.

1. Outside of an academic setting (e.g., in church settings, with friends, etc.), have
   you ever been part of a conversation about origins of the Bible?
   a. With whom?
   b. What was the setting?
   c. What were the issues?
2. Outside of an academic setting (e.g., church, with friends, etc.), have you ever
   been part of a conversation or debate about English versions/translations of the
   Bible?
   a. With whom?
   b. What was the setting?
   c. What were the issues?

3. Do you think that this unit on translation studies has helped you prepare for dealing with translation issues in ministry? If yes, how?
    a. E.g.,for inspiration of scripture discussions?
    b. E.g., manuscript traditions questions?
    c. E.g., general translation issues, such as: KJV, philosophy of or types of translations, gendered language issues?
    d. E.g., issues around BT work going on around the world?
    e. Interpretation issues for sermons, Bible studies, important topics in society?
    f. Others?

The focus group conversations are aimed toward SLO 1, SLO 2, and SLO 3 to ascertain students' level of competency, as well as to ascertain their self-assessment of competency. The audio is analyzed and reviewed for their own descriptions of readiness, the extent and accuracy of knowledge revealed in their conversations, their openness toward and acceptance of translations, and whether their responses show humility and respect towards different viewpoints. Also of special interest to the author are themes that have not been anticipated—themes that are outside the main focus of the SLOs 1, 2, and 3.

Likert scale survey: The fourth and final tool for assessment is the pretest, posttest anonymous survey that utilizes a 5-point Likert scale for fourteen statements and includes an additional four questions for which students write in answers. (See appendix C.) This assessment instrument is the only instrument utilized both before the curriculum is started, and after the curriculum is finished. It is also the only instrument that contains quantitative data. The survey has components aimed at SLO 1, but is especially aligned with SLO 2 regarding attitudes toward the Bible and translation. All students who are

willing to participate and sign the consent form fill out the survey on the very first day of the curriculum. In order to compare the responses that students give on the survey both before and after the eight-week curriculum, each participant writes down bits of their cell phone numbers as well as the birth month of a sibling on the first page of the survey. The anonymity reduces fear around revealing personal thoughts about and attitudes toward the Bible and translations, and also reduces the temptation to choose answers with the motive of pleasing the professor. The anonymity also reassures students that their participation in the project does not put them in jeopardy in any way.

The survey contains fourteen Likert scale statements that cover the topics of starting text, translation theory, the inspiration of scripture, the inspiration of translated scripture, and the use of multiple versions of the Bible. The students self-assess their degree of agreement with the fourteen statements on a 5-point scale, labeled, from left to right, "Strongly disagree," "Somewhat disagree," "Neutral," "Somewhat agree," "Strongly agree." The Likert survey is especially useful for gaining insights into attitude (SLO 2), but can also be used to self-assess knowledge.

In fact, five of the fourteen total statements on the pretest, posttest survey are aimed at SLO 1, the "knowledge" SLO. Specifically, questions 1 and 2 of the survey are aimed at SLO 1.1, question 3 is aimed at SLO 1.3, and questions 4 and 5 are aimed at SLO 1.2. These five statements on the survey capture the students' self-assessment of familiarity with background knowledge that will be introduced during the curriculum: knowledge of manuscript traditions (statement 1), of KJV history (statement 2), of the impossibility of one-to-one transferability (statement 3), of approaches to translation (statement 4), and of terms associated with approaches to translation (statement 5). The

author chose the particular items in these statements because they are concepts that are important to the research question and outcomes, and because they are discussed or referenced in the classroom multiple times or over multiple days, thus reducing the possibility of individual students having missed those topics due to illness or other issues. The expectation is that individual students' movement along the Likert scale would be quite noticeable from pretest to posttest, since the Kuyper College curriculum has previously addressed these topics only briefly.

The nine remaining statements on the survey are aimed at SLO 2, the outcome associated with an attitude of openness toward a wide range of Bible translations. These nine can be separated further into three subtopics, explained below.

"Word of God" subtopic: Statements six, seven, eight, and eleven present what could be described as progressively more dissonant assertions about what can be considered "the inspired word of God:" the written original-language texts, the oral tradition previous to the text, a written translation of the text in any language, and a sign language translation. The word "inspired" was added as a descriptor to heighten the tension for the students since, on the one hand, most Kuyper College students adhere to a very high view of scripture, but on the other, Kuyper students generally have a missional mindset and highly value the communicability of the Bible to any person. The expectations for the pretest are that students would show strong agreement with the statement about the original language text, and reveal more uncertainty as they move to the other three statements down the survey; the expectation for the posttest is that they might still show uncertainty, but reveal slight movement up the scale toward openness to

accepting oral tradition as well as translations, including sign language, as the inspired word of God.

"Legitimate approaches" subtopic: Statements eight and nine on the survey, also aimed at SLO 2, are assertions about "the only legitimate approach" to translation: "one word for one word" or "clearest transfer of meaning." The language was intentionally exclusivist; the expectation is that the posttest, taken after the curriculum, would reveal that students have distanced themselves to some degree from an exclusive attitude toward approaches to translation.

"Use in ministry" subtopic: Statements twelve, thirteen, and fourteen deal with the use of translations in ministry: the likelihood of participants using multiple versions themselves in ministry (statement 12), the likelihood of participants encouraging parishioners to use and accept multiple versions (statement 13), and the comfort level on the part of participants to "tell someone else not to purchase a particular English translation" (statement 14). Statement 14 is purposefully worded to inject an authoritarian tone in this hypothetical interchange. Statement 14 has an open-ended qualitative addition, requiring students to list any translations they would not recommend, but only if they chose "Neutral," "Somewhat agree," or "Strongly agree" for statement 14. No translations are suggested or listed on the survey itself in order to avoid leading the students' responses in any way; thus students would have to use previous knowledge for those examples. The expectation for statements 12 and 13 is that students would show more openness to use of a variety of Bible translations on the posttest than the pretest. Results for statement fourteen, which is about telling someone not to purchase a particular English Bible translation, are harder to anticipate, since the curriculum both

149

helps students understand the flexibility of God's word for translation yet also consider the possible negative effects of some translations, particularly when a translation is susceptible to misuse as related to issues of power and ideology. The qualitative attachment to statement 14 will conceivably help interpret the Likert scale results.

Along with the qualitative attachment to statement 14, there are three more open-ended qualitative questions on the survey aimed at SLO 2 that give more insight into subtopics two and three—the students' use of and therefore possible movement toward openness to various translations from pretest to posttest. They are located at the beginning of the survey in the following format:

Over the course of my whole life, the English Bible version I used the most is
In the recent past, the English Bible version I use the most is
Other English versions I am happy to consult include

The answers given here will allow the researcher to potentially connect English Bible version preferences with growth in SLO proficiency over the course of the curriculum. One limitation of the qualitative questions is that they may not uncover meaningful information from international students who come from non-English-speaking countries. See appendix B for the full Likert survey.

Conclusion

In preparation for leadership roles in potential translation-related conflicts, including people proclaiming, "my opinion is right, and that person is wrong," students will be required to demonstrate that they have the vocabulary and knowledge to help navigate discussions, and interact in ways that show civility and sensitivity to individuals' preferences for, attachment to, and queries about certain translations. This kind of interaction by church leaders is a way to demonstrate to parishioners the trustworthiness, resilience, and flexibility of the Bible for translation, and a reminder of the importance of a unified witness even while working through conflicts.

This chapter has outlined the three SLOs for this curriculum that work together to demonstrate competency for ministry leaders around Bible translation issues, and thus answer the research question. It also details the strategy and curriculum assignments and lectures, shows how the curriculum is connected to the SLOs, and outlines how the assessment instruments evaluate the SLOs. The assessment results derived from analyzing the artifacts from the four different data-gathering instruments are described in chapter five.

CHAPTER 5:

PROJECT OUTCOMES:

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE TRANSLATION STUDIES CURRICULUM

Introduction

This chapter details the assessment results of the translation studies curriculum implemented at Kuyper College with the eleven students enrolled in the Advanced Greek class during the winter semester of 2016. The research question for the project was this: To what extent does the revised Kuyper College Greek language curriculum help inform and equip students to understand and thoughtfully engage the complex issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely occur in their ministry? The goal of the project was to help men and women who are preparing for ministry to understand the complexities of the nature of the Bible, such as its oral history, its reflection of the character of God, and its fundamental translatability, as well as begin to see various complexities of Bible translation, such as textual critical issues and implications from communication theory, in order to be better prepared to counsel and lead other church leaders and laity through translation-related issues. These issues, while having the potential to edify the church body, have instead repeatedly become a source of divisiveness and discord in the church.

The author conducted the research project as a non-experiment design, and collected both quantitative and qualitative data to use in the assessment of the proficiency levels of students regarding the three Student Learning Outcomes (described in detail in chapter four), and thus answer the research question. Four instruments were used to

ascertain aptitudes, attitudes, and competence levels of students with regard to the nature of the Bible and translation issues, and one of the four instruments was utilized both before and after the implementation of the curriculum to identify movement or growth on the part of the students toward the curriculum goals.

In February 2016, during a regularly scheduled class time with the students enrolled in Greek 204, the author explained the purpose of the study, reviewed the informed consent material, the procedures, the risks and benefits, and the high priority for confidentiality on the part of the author regarding names and social data of individual participants regarding their connection to specific outcomes. The students were then asked to sign the consent form (see appendix A) if they wanted to participate in the study, and were assured they could withdraw at any time. All eleven students enrolled in Greek 204 signed the consent form, and all eleven remained a part of the study from start to finish. The author reviewed the informed consent material, the procedures, the risks and benefits, and the high priority for confidentiality before implementation of each instrument, the last of which was conducted on April 7, 2016. Of the four instruments used to collect data, all eleven students were present for the implementation of all the instruments, and also submitted the one necessary assignment after the instruction ended.

The students who participated in this study represented a variety of denominational backgrounds, reflecting the variety at Kuyper College that is described in chapter one. Nine of the eleven students were seniors in their final semester, and the other two were juniors. Two majors were represented: Pre-seminary, and Music and Worship. Three of the eleven participants were international students. The class was made up of one woman and ten men, a gender ratio that is typical for the Greek sequence.

Per the research guidelines, no social data are referenced in the following results in order to maintain confidentiality.

One other noteworthy detail about the make-up of students in this class came out in the information they gave about themselves on the pretest anonymous survey. Seven of the eleven participants disclosed that, in their recent past, the ESV, a word-focused version, was the English Bible translation that they had been using the most. Six of those seven students also stated that the primary Bible version they had each used over the course of their whole lives was in fact the NIV, a translation which leans more idiomatic than the ESV; it has been referred to as a "mediating" version.[1] The other four of the eleven students listed the NIV as the translation they used the most in the recent past, and all four of those students had used the NIV all of their lives. This indicates that nearly two thirds of all of the participants in the study had maintained, or even gained, a preference for using the ESV in the recent past, some time prior to the start of this study. This data will be further explored in the analysis of the results below.

The assessment strategy, as outlined in chapter four, utilized a holistic 4-point rubric to analyze various data streams from four instruments. (See appendix E for the full rubric.) Three of those instruments required grades and were thus not anonymous to the author: a test with objective and essay questions, a translation assignment which was part of a larger research project, and a focus group gathering. The author was then able to collate the data from those three streams for each individual participant, and to summarize the results from this identifiable data stream. The fourth instrument was an anonymous pretest-posttest survey (see chapter 4 for reasons for anonymity) with a number code determined by each user in order to collate data for individual students,

---

[1]Brunn, *One Bible, Many Versions*, 69.

giving the author the ability to first track changes from pretest to posttest for each anonymous participant, and then evaluate the group as a whole.

The assessment results are described below for each of the three SLOs connected to the curriculum. Together, the SLOs aim toward student competency to address translation-related issues in ministry: the first SLO is centered on knowledge, the second SLO is centered on attitude, and the third SLO is centered on skill. Each section lists the assessment instruments that pertain to that particular SLO, followed by a description of the results from that instrument. Since SLO 1 is divided into four parts, that section has four subsections. The assessment of all the artifacts, using the holistic rubric, was compiled for final analysis in order to answer the overarching research question about the extent of the impact of the curriculum on the students' preparedness to understand and engage translation-related issues in the church.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcome 1

SLO 1: Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of key concepts from the translation studies curriculum.

SLO 1.1

Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of *starting text issues.*

Instruments used for SLO 1.1

SLO 1.1 was assessed using the holistic rubric (see appendix E) to guide analysis of the test (both the objective and essay sections), the focus group, and the anonymous Likert scale survey.

Results for SLO 1.1 from the identifiable instruments: test and focus group

Test results (objective and essay) for SLO 1.1: Three of eleven students did not

reach proficiency in knowledge of starting text issues.   None were "below standards;" all

three came in at the "approaching standards" mark; in other words, they correctly

identified some of the key concepts around oral tradition, textual criticism, and the

history of the KJV, but also revealed nearly as much lack of knowledge and

understanding. Of the remaining eight students, six met standards and two exceeded

standards. (See more explanation about the results in the conclusion for SLO 1.1, below.)

Focus group results for SLO 1.1: Thirteen comments were made connected to

SLO 1.1. Many of those comments gave evidence of how the information they had

learned about starting text issues was immediately helpful to them for the church-related

work they were involved in, and several mentioned how the information would have

helped them be better prepared in past situations. For example, students had dealt with

issues related to the KJV, to the reliability of the biblical text, and to footnotes on text

options. The comments by students overall displayed accurate and useful knowledge of

starting text issues. However, none of the three students who had failed to meet SLO 1.1

proficiency on the test made comments that reflected new levels of proficiency. The

eight students who met proficiency levels on the test gave no evidence to change that

assessment. (See Table 5.1, below.)

Results for SLO 1.1 from the anonymous survey

Students assessed themselves in knowledge of starting text issues through two statements on the pretest, posttest survey. The first was regarding awareness of manuscript traditions, and the second was about KJV history. The results for statements 1 and 2 were exactly what the author anticipated; by the end of the curriculum, all eleven students agreed that they were aware of these two issues related to the starting text. (See Tables 5.2 and 5.3 below, as well as appendix B for the survey, and appendix C for raw data.) A comparison of the pretest, posttest survey reveals that 9/11 students showed growth in their self-assessment of awareness of at least one of the two starting text issues.[2]

Conclusion on SLO 1.1

According to the identifiable data stream, 8/11 students met proficiency standards. According to the anonymous data, 11/11 students self-assessed that they were aware of two of the topics covered by SLO 1.1, and 9/11 showed growth. While the test (which fed the identifiable data stream) showed that three students did not meet the proficiency levels determined by the author, of note is that all three of these students were approaching standards; in other words, they showed some grasp of the material, even if it did not meet full proficiency on the test. Also, both the anonymous survey and the focus group revealed that most students had not been familiar with starting text issues before the unit, and so doing well on the test would have required students to review and

---

[2] "Growth" is defined by a student's movement on the Likert scale in a pretest-posttest comparison of the survey from either of the "agree" options to "neutral" or "disagree" options, from "neutral" to any other option, and from either of the "disagree" options to "neutral" or "agree" options. Other changes are referred to in this chapter as "movement." The raw data from the Likert survey is available for reference in appendix C.

memorize new material, which likely did not happen to the extent needed for the three students who did not meet standards on the test. The self-assessment and the focus group discussion revealed that all eleven participants grew in their knowledge of starting text issues. The focus group discussion also revealed a lot of interest in this topic from every student, even the three who were only "approaching standards" on the test, so that gave evidence that these three students at least gained enough awareness of the issues to recognize what kinds of discussions may occur on this topic.

SLO 1.2

Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of *general approaches to translation.*

Instruments used for SLO 1.2

SLO 1.2 was assessed using the holistic rubric (see appendix E) to guide analysis of the test, the focus group discussion, and the anonymous survey.

Results for SLO 1.2 from the identifiable instruments: test and focus group

Test (objective and essay) results for SLO 1.2: One student did not meet proficiency standards; that student was approaching standards. Seven met standards, and three exceeded standards.

Focus group results: Seven comments were made related to SLO 1.2, and all showed accurate knowledge of general approaches to translation; one comment highlighted accurate understanding of foreignization and domestication. The one student

who did not meet proficiency standards on the test did not give any evidence during the focus group gathering which would change that assessment. (See Table 5.1, below.)

Results for SLO 1.2 from the anonymous survey

Statements 4 and 5 asked students to consider their ability to explain approaches to translation, with the example of word-for-word or thought-for-thought approaches (statement 4) as well as the concepts of foreignization and domestication (statement 5). For statement 4, all eleven students chose "agree" options on the posttest; four had chosen a "disagree" or the "neutral" option on the pretest. For statement 5, all eleven students moved from the neutral or "disagree" options to the "agree" options from pretest to posttest. These results exactly matched expectations. Students' self-assessment about their ability to explain these translation-related issues changed substantially from before to after the curriculum. (See Table 5.2 and 5.3 below.)

Conclusion on SLO 1.2

The identifiable data stream showed 10/11 students proficient on information related to approaches to translation. The anonymous data showed 11/11 students agreeing or strongly agreeing on the posttest that they could explain the stated concepts related to approaches to translation in statements 4 and 5, and a pretest, posttest comparison showed 11/11 students moved between one to four points up the scale for both statements.

SLO 1.3

Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of *the complexities of communication.*

Instruments used for SLO 1.3

SLO 1.3 was assessed using the holistic rubric (see appendix E) to guide analysis of the test, the focus group, and the anonymous survey.

Results for SLO 1.3 from the identifiable instruments: *test and focus group*

Test (objective and essay) results for SLO 1.3: Two students out of eleven did not meet proficiency standards; both were marked as "approaching standards" since they missed some of the objective as well as failed to express the relationship between genre/literary elements and communication, and/or failed to reference the ambiguousness of language due to contextual frames and cultural differences. Of the nine who met proficiency, five met standards, and four exceeded standards.

Focus group results: Ten comments were made related to SLO 1.3. All of the comments were general acknowledgements of the complexities of communication, including two references to sign language, and one reference to contextual frames, but without using that term. No one used simplistic or binary descriptions of translation during the discussions. One student stated that this sub-unit was the most helpful, along with the ideology discussion (SLO 1.4, below). The two students who did not meet proficiency standards on the test gave no evidence to assess them any differently. The nine students who met or exceeded proficiency standards on the test gave no evidence to change that assessment. (See Table 5.1 below.)

Results for SLO 1.3 from the anonymous survey

Statement 3 of the pretest, posttest survey aimed at SLO 1.3, addressing belief about one-to-one transferability in translation, with the examples of "Jews," "slaves," and "wives." The summary of the rubric results from the survey elements assessing SLO 1.3: On the posttest, nine of eleven students measured as proficient in understanding the complexities of translation by the posttest, and five of those students showed movement from pretest to posttest. (See Tables 5.2 and 5.3 below.)

Conclusion on SLO 1.3

The identifiable data showed 9/11 meeting proficiency; the anonymous data showed 9/11 meeting proficiency, and 5/11 showing marked change from the pretest. Of note are the identical proficiency outcomes from both data streams.

SLO 1.4

Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of *how ideology affects translation.*

Instruments used for SLO 1.4

SLO 1.4 was assessed using the holistic rubric (see appendix E) to guide analysis of the test, the focus group, and the anonymous survey.

Results for SLO 1.4 from the identifiable instruments: test and focus group

Test (essay) results for SLO 1.4: Three students did not meet proficiency standards; all three were approaching standards, as they demonstrated some grasp of how ideology affects translation, but failed to write a cohesive, informed essay on this topic. Five of the eight who met proficiency standards were in fact marked as exceeding standards.

Focus group results: Seven comments were made related to ideology and translation. All of the comments were connected to recent or current situations that the students were dealing with: questions from a young woman in the youth group about lack of gender-inclusive language in a relatively recent version being used, tensions around gender-inclusive language in general that led to two of the students' churches rejecting the NIV, and also one student's new awareness of potential misuse of familial terms in the context of interpretation of the Bible with or for certain groups. One student stated that this sub-unit was the most helpful, along with the complexities of communication discussion (SLO 1.3, above), which is very closely related to this topic. None of the three students who failed to meet proficiency standards on the test gave evidence that would change that assessment. The eight students who met proficiency standards on the test gave no evidence to change that assessment. (See Table 5.1 below.)

Results for SLO 1.4 from the anonymous survey

Statement 3 of the survey aims at both SLO 1.3, and SLO 1.4, since the examples in the statement are related to ideology and translation. In sum, nine of eleven students measured as proficient in knowledge of the role of ideology in translation on the survey.

162

The two students who did not meet proficiency were the same ones who did not meet proficiency for SLO 1.3. (See Table 5.2 below.)

Conclusion on SLO 1.4

The identifiable instruments showed that 8/11 participants met proficiency levels. (See Table 5.1.) Of note is that the three who did not meet proficiency standards were approaching standards, and not below standards. The anonymous survey revealed that 9/11 participants met proficiency, and 5/11 students showed growth from pretest to posttest. (See Tables 5.2 and 5.3.)

SLO 1: Identifiable, post-curricular data

■ Students who did not meet proficiency　　■ Students who met proficiency

| | SLO 1.1 | SLO 1.2 | SLO 1.3 | SLO 1.4 |

(Bars: SLO 1.1 — met 8, did not meet 3; SLO 1.2 — met 10, did not meet 1; SLO 1.3 — met 9, did not meet 2; SLO 1.4 — met 8, did not meet 3)
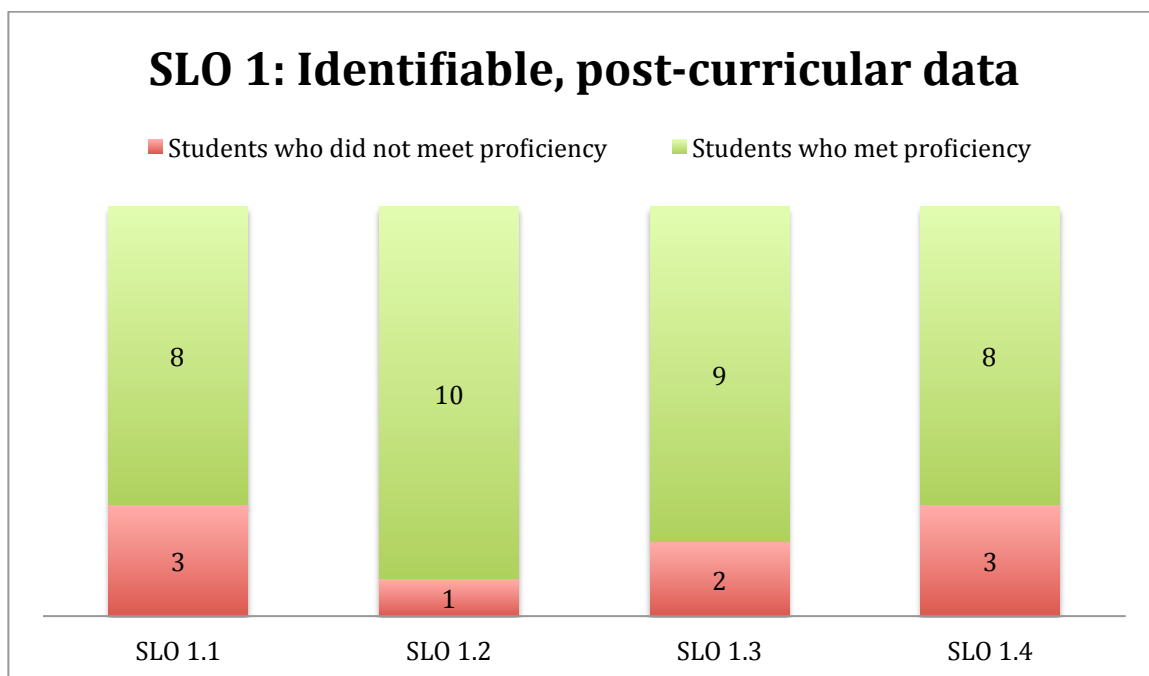
Figure 5.1
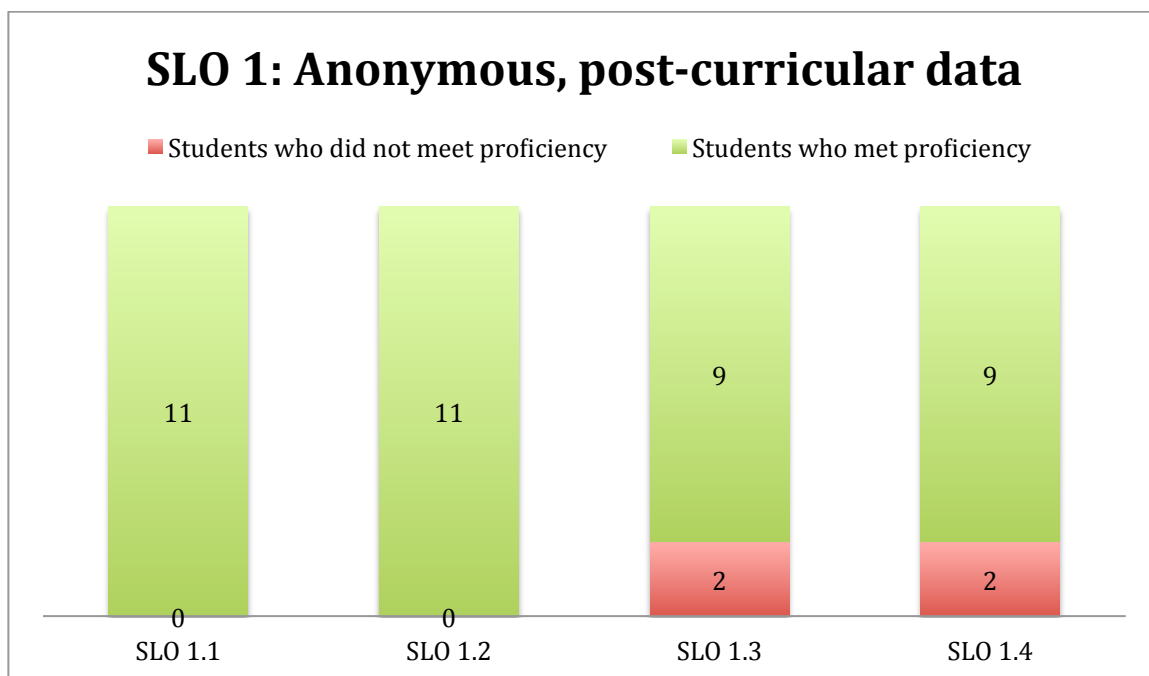SLO 1 Proficiency Results from Identifiable Data

Figure 5.2
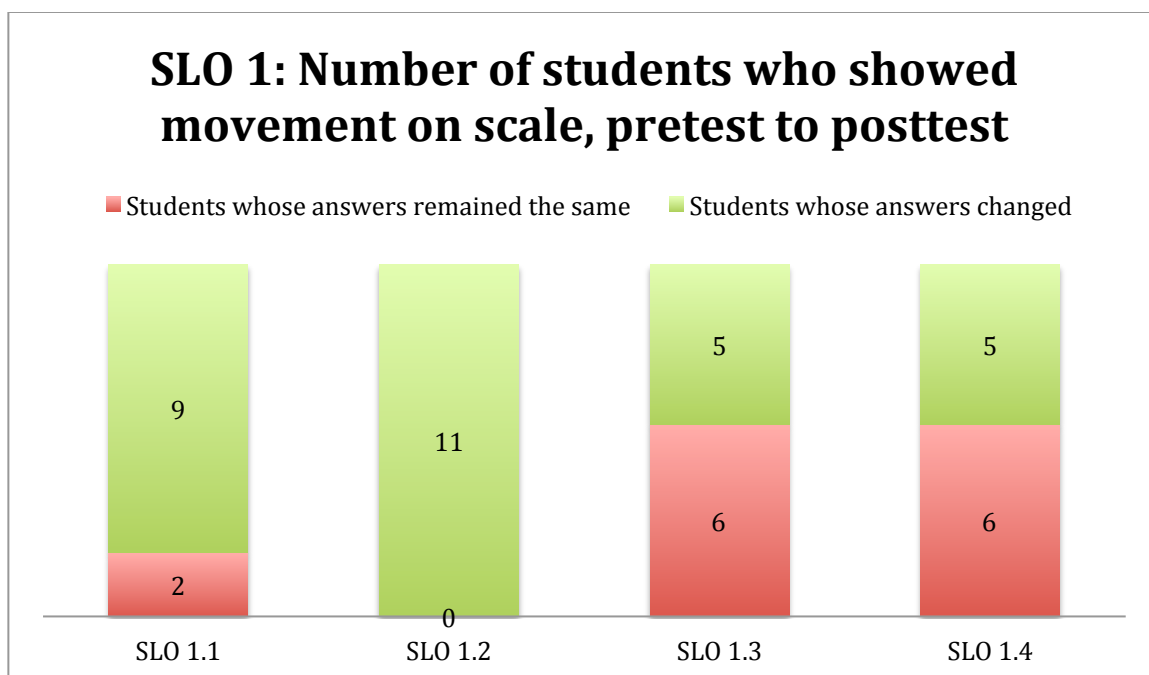SLO 1 Proficiency Results from Anonymous Data

Figure 5.3
SLO 1 Anonymous Data Changes, Pretest to Posttest

Compilation of All Data Contributing to SLO 1

Identifiable, qualitative data summary for SLO 1

The results showed that 9/11 students demonstrated proficiency for SLO 1 according to the identifiable data stream.

The breakdown for SLO 1 and the identifiable data:

7/11 students demonstrated full proficiency in knowledge of all four of the key concepts from the translation studies curriculum.

2/11 students demonstrated proficiency in knowledge of three of the four key concepts from the translation studies curriculum.

1/11 students demonstrated proficiency in knowledge of one of the four key concepts from the translation studies curriculum.

1/11 students did not demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of any key concepts from the translation studies curriculum.

None of the eleven students ended up in the worst category—"below standards"—for any of the four SLO 1 sub-points, but four different students were assessed just below standards—at "approaching standards"—on one or more of the four sub-points, as noted above. Two of those four students were at the "approaching standards" mark only one time and met proficiency for the other three sub-points; however, one of the four students was at the "approaching standards" mark for three of the four categories, and one of the four students only met the "approaching standards" mark for all four categories. To state it differently, one student only met proficiency for one of the four categories, and one student did not meet proficiency for any category, leading to the 9/11 number, above.

Anonymous, quantitative data summary for SLO 1

On the posttest, 11/11 students self-assessed as aware of starting text issues (1.1), and 9/11 participants showed dramatic growth from the pretest. On the posttest, 11/11 students self-assessed as aware of general approaches to translation (1.2), and 11/11 participants self-assessed growth of 2-4 points on the 5-point Likert scale for at least one of those statements. On the posttest, 9/11 students were assessed by the author as aware of complexities of translation (1.3) and ideology (1.4); the same two students struggled with both issues. For both SLO 1.3 and 1.4, 5/11 students demonstrated growth in knowledge from the pretest. The conclusion from the anonymous Likert scale data is that 9/11 students demonstrated proficiency for SLO 1.

Analysis of the combined data streams for SLO 1

On the strength of the identifiable data, and the nearly same conclusion overall from the anonymous data, the author determined that 9/11 students reached proficiency for SLO 1; also, 11/11 students displayed growth.

SLO 1: All post-curricular results

■ Students who did not meet proficiency   ■ Students who met proficiency

9

2

SLO 1: Post-
curricular data,
combined
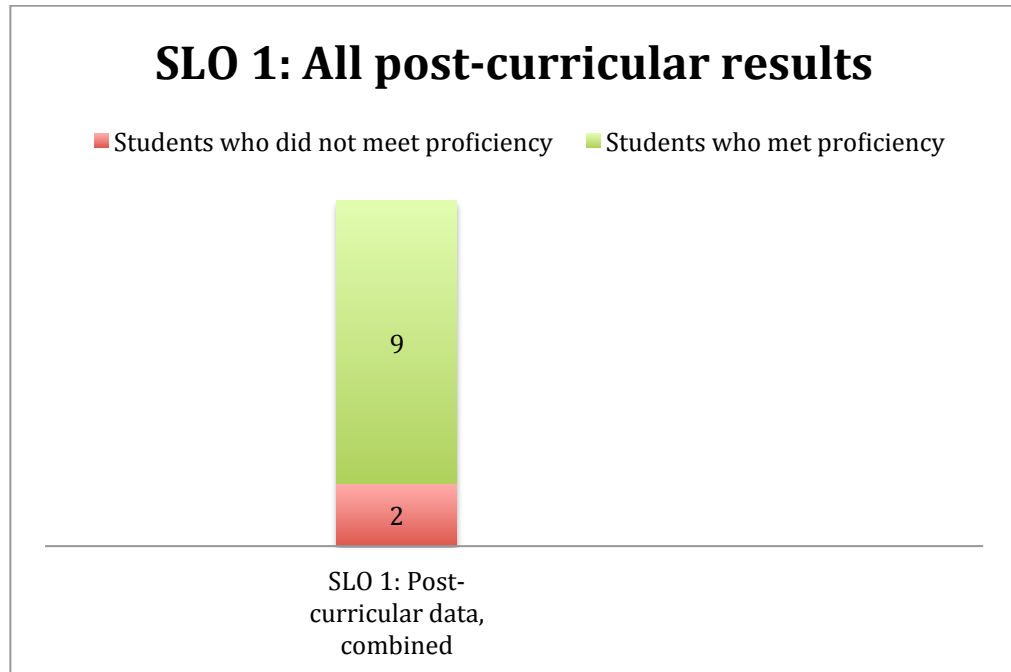
Figure 5.4
SLO 1 Assessment Report for Proficiency

SLO 1: Number of students who showed growth, pre-curricular to post-

curricular: **11/11**

Figure 5.5
SLO 1 Assessment Report for Growth

Reflection on the outcomes of SLO 1

As explained in chapter four, SLO 1 is foundational to the other two SLOs, and

these results for SLO 1 in fact correlated to similar results in SLO 3 (see below). Based

on the fact that 9/11 students either exceeded or reached full or very near proficiency, and

the other 2/11 students were "approaching proficiency" in most knowledge areas, the

curriculum was moderately successful in "informing" students of the issues, since all students either reached proficiency and/or demonstrated dramatic growth in knowledge.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcome 2

SLO 2

Students will display openness toward a wide range of Bible translations and translation options.

Instruments used for SLO 2

SLO 2 was assessed using the holistic rubric (appendix E) to guide analysis of portions of the test, the translation assignment, the focus group, and a large percentage of the anonymous survey.

Results for SLO 2 from the identifiable instruments:

test, translations assignment, and focus group

Test (essay) on SLO 2: One student did not meet standards, and that student was at the "approaching standards" mark; while the student demonstrated openness to translation options, the student failed to write coherently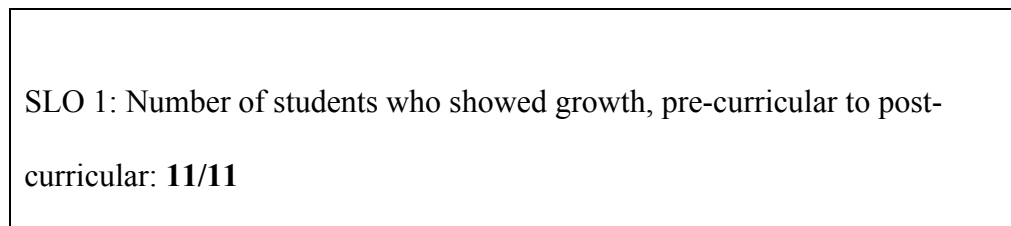 about the translatability of scripture. Of the ten who reached proficiency, seven met standards, and three exceeded standards.

Translation assignment for SLO 2: The purpose of the translation assignment was to have students demonstrate their openness to translation options by requiring them to write a translation that does not conform to a word-focused approach.   Nine out of eleven students did not meet proficiency; in other words, both of the translations of nine

169

of the eleven students were evaluated as word-centered. One of the nine was below

standards, eight of the nine were approaching standards. Of the two who met

proficiency, one met standards, and one exceeded standards.

Explanation of the unexpected results: The explanation for such a large

percentage of students not meeting proficiency could be the result of many factors,

including the following: 1) Students were not open to non-word-focused translations,

and so did not produce one for the assignment. Counter evidence: the test results (see

above), the posttest anonymous data (see below), and the focus group data (see below)

demonstrated a moderate to large degree of openness to multiple translation options and

approaches on the part of all students by the end of the curriculum. 2) Students did not

care enough about the assignment to do it well. Counter-evidence: Several of the students

who did not meet proficiency on this assignment were "A" students for everything else

during the course of the semester, and previous semesters. 3) The instructions were

unclear. Counter evidence: two students did exactly what was intended for this

assignment. 4) The students were not equipped well enough to produce a translation that

was not word-focused. The counter-evidence here is weak. Only two students did the

assignment well, so while the instructions for the final result may have been clear, the

understanding of how to reach the result was lacking. The author should have anticipated

how difficult it would be for students to produce a translation that is not word-for-word

when so many of them are constantly reading word-focused translations (see

introduction) as well as writing word-focused translations for their previous Greek

assignments. Interestingly, the two students who did this assignment well also disclosed

during the focus group discussion that they had a lot of previous exposure to paraphrase

versions or idiomatic translations. While the other three reasons for poor results that are

listed above could also have been contributing factors, the author is confident, on

hindsight, that the students were not exposed to enough variety of translations, plus were

not given enough instruction and practice time to hone their skills to adequately fulfill the

requirements of this assignment. The conclusion: This assignment turned out to be a

"skill" assignment more than an "attitude" assignment, and because the students were not

prepared well, their skills were lacking. The author did not spend enough time teaching

students how to translate in a way that is not word-for-word. (See proposed changes,

below.) Since all the other data streams for SLO 2 counters the data from this assignment

(see below), the author is considering the data from this assignment ineffective for

assessment of what SLO 2 is intended to measure: attitude towards Bible translation

options.

Focus group: Sixteen comments were made pertaining to SLO 2. Students

commented on their growth in openness to a variety of translations, including more

openness to the KJV, to translations outside of the NIV, and to sign language translations.

One student stated it this way: "I don't have to push one version, but encourage people to

use multiple versions of Bible if they wish to." Another student said, "The only version

we had was NIV, and I had a negative attitude toward other translations. Before, I

thought that the NIV was the truth and the only one. Until I had this class." Students

discussed how they have already been encouraging others to use more than one

translation, and how they would be doing that in the future as ministry leaders. Two

comments were made by students that revealed that their home churches, located in

different states, had in fact become less open to certain translations in recent years; both

171

switched from the NIV and a general openness to different translations, to use of the ESV only. Two comments were made about the need for more communicative translations to be made available in specific international settings.

Also of note: the one participant who did not meet proficiency standards on the test clearly did meet standards in the comments made during the focus group. That student showed hospitality towards versions from different textual traditions as well as openness to word-focused, meaning-based, and paraphrases of the Bible; therefore the author concluded that the student did in fact meet proficiency for SLO 2, so that 11/11 met proficiency according to the identifiable data streams. (See Table 5.6 , and also the conclusion, below.)

Results for SLO 2 from the anonymous survey

Nine of the fourteen statements on the survey aimed at SLO 2, openness toward a wide range of Bible translations. Also, the four qualitative questions on the survey were aimed at SLO 2, and gave more insight into the students' use of various translations, along with insight into their openness to diverse translations. (See appendix B for the full survey.) As explained in chapter four, the various survey pieces that aim at SLO 2 are divided into three subtopics.

"Word of God" subtopic: Four of the nine statements are examples of what text/non-text thing can be considered "the inspired word of God": original language autographs, oral tradition previous to the written text, an English or other language translation of the text, and a sign language translation.   On the pretest, seven of eleven students marked "strongly agree" for all four examples of what can be considered the

"inspired word of God," and an eighth student marked either "somewhat" or "strongly agree" for all four categories. The author expected much more cautious responses on the pretest for three of the four statements, since the standard definition of "inspired" in the denominations represented by these students would apply only to the Bible's original language autographs. Thus the pretest results showed that a majority of students had a high regard for the general translatability of the Bible, even before the start of the curriculum. These numbers go well beyond the expectations of the author. On the posttest, in fact, not one student marked a "disagree" option for any of the four examples being the inspired word of God. Because students started so high on the continuum, there was very little room for movement on the Likert scale for most students regarding those four statements. By the end, 11/11 students met or exceeded standards on openness to translation, and 3/11 students showed movement from pretest to posttest.

Explanation of the results: Kuyper College students are mission-minded, and they hear a missional refrain throughout their College courses; they also tend to be praxis-oriented (see chapter one), so perhaps they are more likely than some to set aside abstract "inspiration" definitions and place a high priority on the communicability and translatability of the Bible, and have a high regard for biblical content geared for various groups.

"Legitimate approaches" subtopic: Two of the nine statements on the survey that are aimed at SLO 2 are about "the only legitimate approach" to translation as one-to-one substitution of words (statement 9) or clearest transfer of meaning (statement 10). The language was intentionally exclusivist in order to test whether students' would be drawn into an "either/or" mindset by tempting them to choose a favorite approach. For subtopic

two, the author concluded that by the posttest, 11/11 students met or exceeded standards, and 5/11 showed growth in openness to translation options from pretest to posttest. The data as a whole correlated well with the expectation that students would become more open to translation options during the course of the curriculum.

"Use in ministry" subtopic: Two of the nine survey statements aimed at SLO 2 are about use of multiple versions of the Bible in ministry, either their own use of multiple versions (statement 12), or their encouragement of parishioners to use multiple versions (statement 13). A pretest, posttest comparison of these two statements showed six of the eleven students had marked "Strongly agree" for both of those categories already on the pretest, so there was no possibility of upward movement for them. In sum, on the posttest, all eleven students marked one of the "agree" options for both statements; nine of eleven students marked "Strongly agree" for both statements. Thus the final numbers show that, after going through the curriculum, 11/11 students were open to using more than one translation themselves, and for recommending the same to parishioners; in fact, 9/11 circled "Strongly agree" on the posttest for both statements; overall, 5/11 showed movement on the Likert scale.

The last of the nine statements, statement 14, is also related to the "use in ministry" subtopic, and is about the comfort level on the part of students to "tell someone else not to purchase a particular English translation" in their ministry. Statement 14 is purposefully worded to inject an authoritarian tone in this hypothetical interchange, and thus reflects an attitude that the author as well as the readings had highlighted as a potential cause of division during the course of the curriculum. This statement also has an open-ended addition that requires students to list any translations they would be

174

comfortable telling someone not to purchase, but only if they chose "Neutral,"

"Somewhat agree," or "Strongly agree" for statement 14. No translations are listed on

the survey, so as not to lead the students in any way. (See appendix B for the full survey,

and appendix C for the raw survey data.) On the pretest, ten of eleven students marked

3's, 4's, and 5's (Neutral-Strongly Agree), and so had to add qualitative data by filling in

a box with examples of English translations or versions they would tell someone else not

to purchase. Translations listed on the pretest that the ten students would be comfortable

telling someone not to purchase included the following: The Message (x5), the KJV (x2),

the NIV, the TNIV, the Street Bible, the Voice, and the Amplified Bible. On the posttest,

five of eleven students marked the 3 (Neutral) or higher, a notable change from the

pretest, and three of those five marked "3" or "Neutral." Translations that were listed by

those four students on the posttest were the following: The Message (x3), "any

paraphrase," and the NLT. To summarize the change from before to after the curriculum,

the pretest showed ten of eleven students would have felt comfortable turning someone

against a certain English translation for purchase, including the two most used versions in

the United States: the KJV and the NIV. On the posttest, only two of eleven were in the

"agree" camp, three of the eleven were neutral, and neither the KJV nor the NIV were

listed as translations they would tell others not to purchase. Thus from pretest to posttest,

the results show a stark contrast: the pretest revealed only 1/11 students abstaining from

telling others not to purchase a certain English version; the posttest revealed 9/11

students either abstaining from telling others not to purchase a certain version, or marking

"Neutral." Thus the results showed either high or cautious openness by 9/11 students to

various English Bible translations, and the other 2/11 some openness. Remarkably, 8/11

students showed marked change from before to after the curriculum. While this result was perhaps more dramatic than expected, it does match up with the cautiously anticipated outcome, since the author emphasized a hospitable approach to people—with their ties to various English versions—as an effort to reduce or at least to not perpetuate an "either/or" mentality in the church.

Along with the single open-ended question attached to statement 14, which is located at the end of the survey, three open-ended questions were also placed at the beginning of the survey that aimed at SLO 2 (subdivisions two and three) and gave information about the participants' personal use of English translations, and therefore would show possible movement toward openness to various translations from pretest to posttest. As referenced briefly in the introduction to this chapter, the first two questions (answered nearly identically in the pretest and the posttest by all eleven students) revealed the following information: 1) 10/11 students, over the course of their whole lives, had used the NIV the most; 1/11 had used the ESV the most over the course of their whole lives. 2) 7/11 students listed the ESV as the version they had been using in the recent past; 4/11 listed the NIV as the version they had been using in the recent past. 3) For 6/7 students who were using the ESV in the recent past, the version they had shifted away from was the NIV, which they had listed as the version they had used the most over the course of their lives. In sum, the data reveals that a majority of students in the class were using the same English translation—the word-focused ESV—at the time this study was conducted, and that several had shifted from the NIV. Kuyper College does not recommend or endorse any particular English Bible translation, so this was a somewhat surprising result.

The third qualitative question at the beginning of the survey was an open-ended follow-up to the first two: "Other English versions I am happy to consult include…" On the pretest, one student left it blank, but the rest of the students listed one version (three students), two versions (three students) or four versions (one student). Interestingly, on the pretest, not even one of the seven students who was using the ESV as their main version listed the NIV as a version they would be happy to consult, but three of the seven ESV-users had listed the NLT, a meaning-based translation, as a version they would be happy to consult. Perhaps less surprisingly on the pretest, four of the seven ESV-users listed only word-focused versions as versions they would be happy to consult: NASB and NKJV. Thus the pretest showed the seven ESV-using students as a mix of students who seemed to prefer word-focused translations along with some who were possibly anti-NIV, since they had listed the idiomatic NLT in their "consult" versions and had not listed the NIV, which is in fact the most-used English version in the U.S. after the KJV (see chapter one). Also on the pretest, three of the four NIV-users included a mix of word-focused and meaning-based versions that they would be happy to consult; one of the four listed only the NLT, a meaning-based version. Thus one of the four NIV-users appeared to reject word-focused versions on the pretest. The posttest, however, revealed dramatic changes. For this third question on the posttest, four of the seven ESV readers listed the NIV as a version they would be happy to consult—none had done this on the pretest— and a fifth student listed the NLT. The remaining two of the ESV users still listed only word-focused options (NASB and NKJV) on the posttest. The one NIV-user who had, on the pretest, avoided listing a word-focused translation as a version they would be happy to consult, wrote "Any" on the posttest, thus showing a new degree of openness. In sum,

177

on the posttest, nine of eleven students listed multiple versions that represented a mix of translation approaches as versions they would be happy to consult, and six of those nine showed marked change from pretest to posttest.

Use in ministry: The collated data from the "use in ministry" statements revealed that 9/11 participants showed clear openness to multiple versions by the time the posttest was taken, 2/11 were approaching standards, and all eleven students showed growth. Also, six students showed marked movement toward openness to multiple versions from pretest to posttest.

Conclusion on the anonymous survey and SLO 2 on openness to multiple translations and translation options: the students displayed substantial growth from start to finish. The holistic rubric was filled out for each student, pretest and posttest, and based on the Likert survey's quantitative and qualitative data combined, zero students ended up below standards, two students were approaching standards, five students met standards, and four students exceeded standards. As far as measuring changes from pretest to posttest for SLO 2, all eleven students—even the two who ended up only at the approaching standards mark—showed measurable growth in openness to multiple translation options in at least one of the four subdivisions on the survey. The numerical summary for the anonymous survey on SLO 2: 9/11 met proficiency, 11/11 showed growth.

Compilation of All Data for SLO 2

Identifiable, qualitative data for SLO 2

11/11 students met proficiency for SLO 2, after disallowing the translation assignment, which the author determined did not in fact reflect students' attitudes toward translation options (see above), but rather a lack of skill, and the culpability for that falls on the instructor. The result of 100% of students meeting proficiency reflects the author's judgment that the one student whose SLO 2 test data from the test did not show proficiency in fact displayed very strong proficiency in the focus group gathering.

Anonymous, quantitative and qualitative data for SLO 2

9/11 students met proficiency for SLO 2, and 11/11 showed growth.
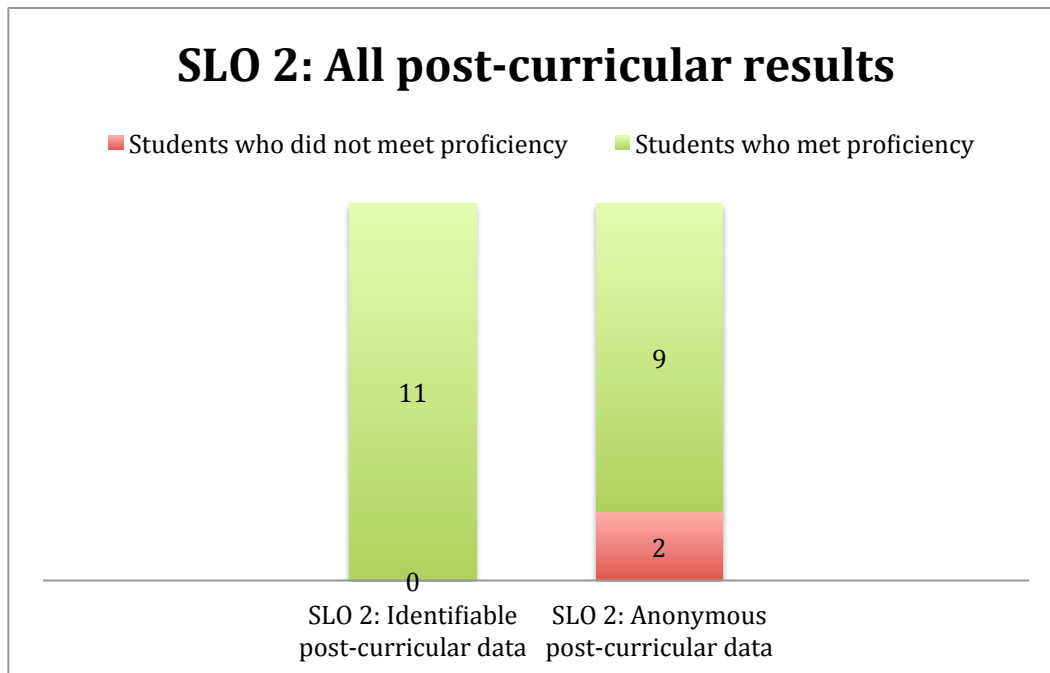
Figure 5.6
SLO 2 Proficiency Results from Identifiable Data (left column) and
    Anonymous Data (right column)

Analysis of the combined data streams for SLO 2

The strength of the identifiable data, and its result of 11/11 students meeting proficiency, together with the fact that 50% of the anonymous data also revealed 11/11 students meeting proficiency, brings the author to conclude that 11/11 students met proficiency for SLO 2, openness to multiple translations and translation options, and 11/11 students showed marked growth in one or more of the sub-points for SLO 2.

SLO 2: Combined post-curricular results

■ Students who did not meet proficiency ■ Students who met proficiency

11

0

SLO 2: Post-
curricular data,
combined
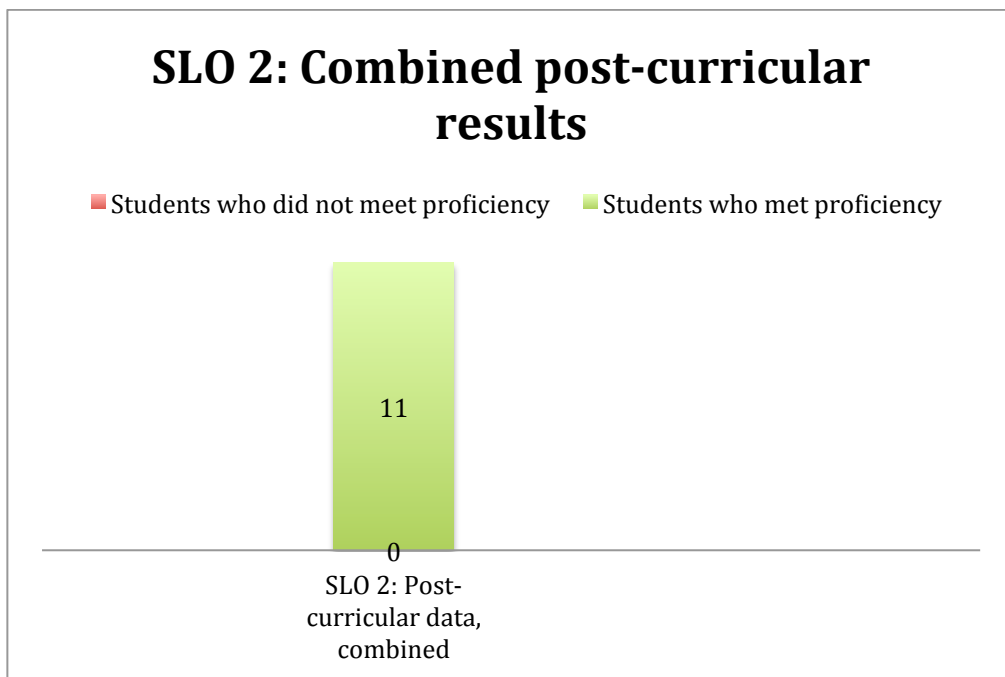
Figure 5.7
SLO 2 Assessment Results for Proficiency

SLO 2: Number of students who showed growth, pre-curricular to post-

curricular: **11/11**

Figure 5.8
SLO 2 Assessment Report for Growth

Reflections on the outcomes of SLO 2

The conclusion of the author is that the curriculum was very successful in reaching the goal of moving students toward openness to a variety of translation options. The method of exposing the complexity of translation seemed to have helped students see the validity of various translation options, which then resulted in changed attitudes toward translation. The anonymous pretest clearly revealed strong preferences for specific approaches to translation and even certain versions, as well as a bias against certain translation approaches or translations. For example, the anonymous data revealed that a high percen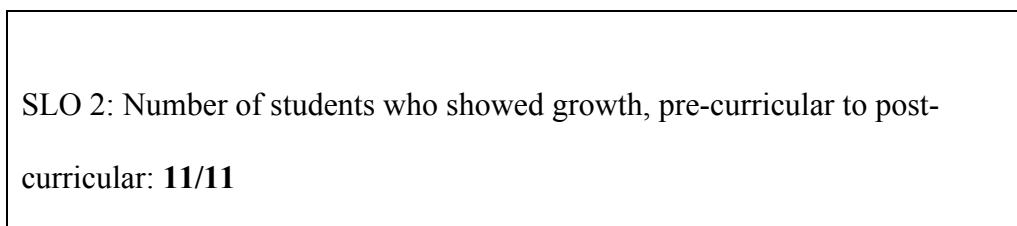tage of the class used the word-focused ESV, and some of them appeared to be anti-NIV at the start of the curriculum. Both the anonymous data and the identifiable data also revealed that at least one student was strongly pro-NIV and was not using any of the more word-focused English versions at the start of the curriculum. All of the post-curriculum data streams, however, revealed change. The data clearly revealed that substantial changes took place in students' attitudes toward translations and translation options, to the extent that all eleven students reached proficiency, and all eleven students showed growth. The caution still expressed by some students toward certain translations is not surprising, since the curriculum ended with a discussion of ideological concerns. Most students found it difficult to execute their changed attitudes by producing a non-word-centered translation themselves; the proposed changes to the curriculum will potentially change the outcome in upcoming cohorts. Another interesting outcome shown in the anonymous data is that the four students who landed in the highest possible categories for openness to multiple translations represented both reading groups: two of the four were NIV-users, and two were ESV-users.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcome 3

SLO 3

Students will demonstrate the ability to respond to translation questions or

conflicts knowledgeably and with respect.

Instruments used for SLO 3

SLO 3 was assessed using the holistic rubric (appendix E) to guide analysis of

portions of the test and the focus group.

Results for SLO 3 from the identifiable instruments

Test results for SLO 3: While the two essays asking for response to scenarios

were particularly geared for SLO 3, the author gleaned insights into students' abilities

regarding SLO 3 from all six of the essays. (See appendix D for a list of the essays.) In

analyzing their responses, the author looked for evidence of thoughtful, accurate

explanations, acceptance of translations, cautious, humble responses, and hospitality

towards people, and then marked the holistic rubric accordingly. Two students did not

meet proficiency standards; both were approaching standards. Five met standards, and

four exceeded standards.

Focus group results: Twenty comments were made during the focus group session

in connection to SLO 3. The focus group questions were intentionally open-ended to get

students thinking and talking about possible ministry situations, and to get them to

articulate the knowledge they have gained in order to ascertain whether they could indeed

give thoughtful, accurate explanations of the issues, and whether they displayed humility

and hospitality in their responses. Since all students were asked to speak at least once during the course of the focus group gathering, all students could be assessed at some level. Most of the comments related to SLO 3 were reports about translation issues that had come up at various points in lives of the participants, along with further commentary that could be analyzed for the above themes related to the desired competencies. Many commented that the curriculum was immediately helpful to them for the church-related work they were already involved in. One participant reported that a KJV enthusiast had just joined the Bible study this student was leading at his church. The student commented, "I had never heard of people who prefer the KJV before this class. It's so interesting that this [situation] came up while we were studying this in this class." The student then went on to display his ability to avert conflict and promote unity by being respectful to that person. Another participant's lengthy comment used information from every SLO 1 sub-point with accuracy and with wonderful sensitivity as the student explained how the ideology and direct transferability discussions have been helpful in thinking about how to communicate or "translate" texts about God as Father for the various youth in the student's outreach work whose fathers are the missing or abusive parent. Several participants mentioned how the information would have helped them be better prepared in past situations. One said, "If I have the same situation again, I know enough not to disparage the KJV." Many discussed how helpful the curriculum would be in future ministry. One commented, "I can …encourage people to…see the Bible from different perspectives, and from [different] translation perspectives." Another said, "And [this unit has] also helped me pastorally. That we can give a legitimate and honest account of how and why our Bible is worthy of the attention we give it." While not every

student gave enough information during the focus group gathering to assess the fullness

of their proficiency, all eleven students demonstrated some measure of respect and

humility in their discussion about translation issues.

Results for SLO 3 from the anonymous survey

No part of the survey was used to assess SLO 3.

Analysis of the data for SLO 3

Identifiable, qualitative data: The two students who did not meet proficiency

standards on the test also did not give enough evidence in the focus group gathering to

bring them to meet the proficiency standards. While they both showed a degree of

respect for those with varying viewpoints, they were unable to demonstrate

knowledgeable, thoughtful responses that clearly exhibited good leadership in difficult

situations. Therefore 9/11 students demonstrated the ability to respond to translation

questions or conflicts knowledgeably and with respect. (See Table 5.9.)

SLO 3: All post-curricular results

■ Students who did not meet proficiency   ■ Students who met proficiency

9

2

SLO 3: Identifiable
post-curricular data
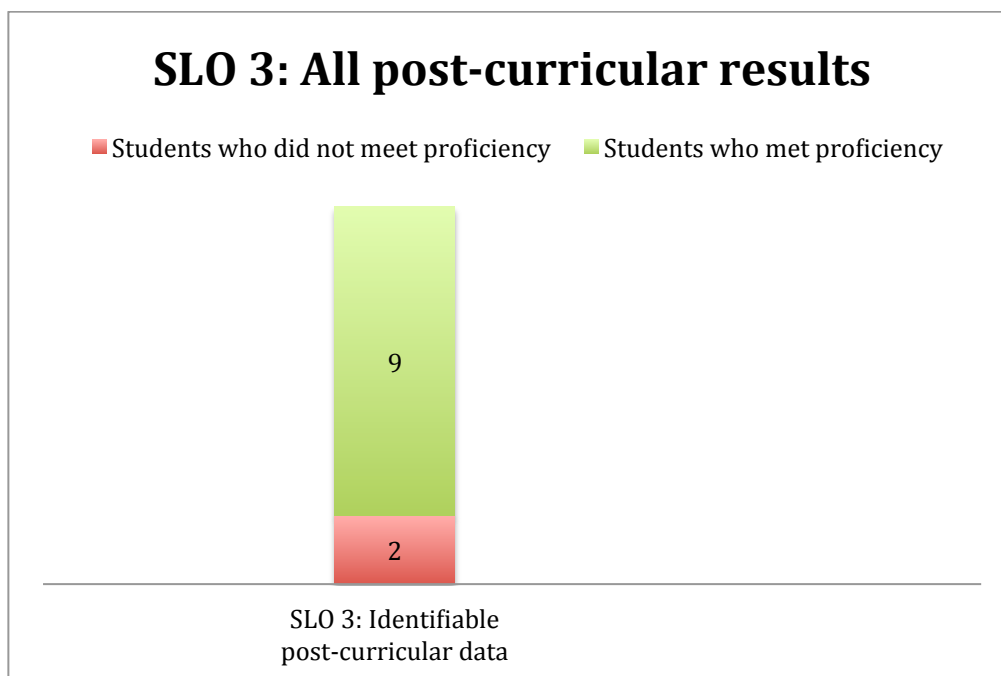
Figure 5.9
SLO 3 Assessment Report for Proficiency

SLO 3: Number of students who showed growth from identifiable sources,

based on of students' self-assessment in the focus group, as well as on assumed

growth displayed in assessment of SLO 1 and SLO 2 (more below): **11/11**

Figure 5.10
SLO 3 Assessment Report for Growth

Reflections on the outcomes of SLO 3

All students demonstrated some level of achievement of SLO 3. The fact that

four students were able to exceed standards was very encouraging. Understandably,

many students revealed room for growth. For example, one student showed lack of

185

sensitivity on one of the test essays, but demonstrated respectful, knowledgeable responses in other essays, and also during the focus group discussion.   Not surprisingly—given the dependency of each of the three SLOs on the previous ones—the same two students who did not demonstrate proficiency in SLO 1 were the students who did not demonstrate proficiency for SLO 3.   In conclusion, the high number of students who showed proficiency in writing (for the test), and the substantiation of that proficiency orally as well (in the focus group) indicates that the curriculum was highly successful in equipping students to thoughtfully handle translation issues in ministry. To reach full proficiency for all students for SLO 3, the curriculum should first of all be adjusted to address the concerns mentioned in the conclusion for SLO 1 (see above).

Conclusions on the Research Question

To what extent did the revised Kuyper College Greek language curriculum help inform and equip students to understand and thoughtfully engage the complex issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely occur in their ministry?

The anonymous survey given as pretest showed a low self-assessment by all eleven students with regard to at least one area of knowledge of translation issues before the curriculum started. The data streams showed growth in knowledge by every student, with 9/11 demonstrating proficiency for SLO 1 by the end of the curriculum. The anonymous survey given as pretest also revealed that several students had a strong preference for a certain kind of translation, with ten of eleven students showing a demonstrable lack of openness to some translation approaches and options. The

subsequent data streams showed a complete reversal by the end of the curriculum, with all eleven students showing demonstrable openness to a variety of translation approaches and options so that 11/11 demonstrated proficiency for SLO 2 post curriculum. While no data was collected before the curriculum pertaining to proficiency levels of SLO 3, the fact that SLO 3 is dependent on SLO 1 and SLO 2 suggests that proficiency levels for SLO 3 were weak for all eleven students at the start of the curriculum. By the end of the curriculum, nine of eleven students demonstrated proficiency for SLO 3. Thus, the identifiable and anonymous data streams showed 9/11 proficient for SLO 1, with extensive growth for a minimum of 6/11 students, and some growth for the five remaining students. The identifiable and anonymous data streams showed 11/11 proficient for SLO 2, with demonstrable growth on the part of 10/11 students. For SLO 3, the identifiable, post-curriculum data streams showed 9/11 proficient, with the assumption of growth for all eleven students, based on self-assessment of students in the focus group, as well as on growth displayed in assessment of SLO 1 and SLO 2.

Analysis of the identifiable data streams showed that the same two students who did not meet the SLO 1 knowledge proficiencies (collected from the test and focus group) also did not meet proficiency for SLO 3, the skill-centered SLO. This fits into the educational expectation that students need transmission and reception of pertinent information as the starting point for proper skill development. The encouraging part is that, based on the fact that 2/11 students were, at minimum, "approaching proficiency" in all knowledge areas at the end of the curriculum, and 9/11 students either reached full or exceeded proficiency, overall the curriculum was successful in "informing" students of the issues, since all eleven students either reached proficiency or demonstrated growth

187

along with near proficiency. However, to get every single student to a level of proficiency in all knowledge areas to the point that it would affect the SLO 3 skills outcome would take some retooling of the curriculum. (See "Proposed curriculum changes," below.) The fact that all students reached proficiency for SLO 2 did in fact affect SLO 3, as the openness to translation showed by all eleven students correlated to all eleven students being respectful in their interactions with others; it was their inaccurate display of knowledge, not respect, that kept the two students from meeting proficiency for SLO 3. (See appendix E for the holistic rubric for SLO 3.)

Eight weeks of a transmission-centered curriculum cannot possibly result in mastery of all the knowledge, a complete change in attitudes, or seasoned, perfect displays of knowledgeable, respectful interactions. However, the fact that 9/11 reached proficiency for SLO 1 and for SLO 3, 11/11 reached proficiency for SLO 2, and that all eleven students displayed growth in all three SLOs leads the author to conclude that the curriculum was highly successful in informing and equipping students to understand and thoughtfully engage issues related to the nature of the Bible and Bible translation that will likely occur in their ministry.

As for the overall reception of the curriculum, the students were very eager for the curriculum, and were extremely engaged in class time discussions for the entire unit, as it seemed to meet current needs. In fact, the translation conflict examples given during class time to demonstrate the need for the curriculum did not need extensive explanation, as students were aware of most them because of prior personal experience. At nearly every class time gathering, students shared stories of how their lives had already been affected by these issues, including discussions that were going on in their churches about

acceptable translations, questions about origins of scripture from family members or friends (stemming from books, history channel shows, documentaries, etc.), interactions with KJV enthusiasts, questions about English translations in youth groups they were leading, and frustration by contacts in international settings who found the Bible in their language uncommunicative. Getting through the daily lecture material was a constant battle, since students wanted to dig deeper into discussion, get their questions answered, and get their friends' questions answered, too. Several times during class time as well as the focus group, students expressed regret that they had not studied these subjects sooner because it would have helped them better navigate through the issues that had already come up in their church-related experiences. One student also commented, "So many of my own struggles to understand the origins and the various translations of scripture came together for me as we studied the nuances. I will and already have used what we've learned in my interactions with people."

The strong outcomes of the curriculum will also feed into the assessment of Kuyper College's Student Learning Outcomes that are most directly connected with this curriculum: SLO 1.3, [The student will] "Apply biblical principles to intellectual, ethical, spiritual, and social issues," SLO 2.3, [The student will] "Demonstrate awareness of the variety of social, economic, religious, and cultural factors that affect current local and global issues," and SLO 5.3, [The student will] "Demonstrate the professional skills of the chosen vocation."[3]

---

[3] *Kuyper College Catalog*, 2016-2017, 6.

Additional Remarks: Reflections on the Outcomes by Instrument, Proposed

Changes, Unexpected Results, Further Studies

Reflections on the outcomes by instrument (not by SLO)

Test: The objective section showed less command of knowledge than the author expected. The essays ended up being a rich source of qualitative data for all SLOs, not just the particular SLOs that the author had in mind. This should not have been surprising, because figuring out how to separate the topics into subunits for an orderly curriculum had been a struggle all along, since all of these translation issues are so intertwined. The integration of the information on the essay responses by students in fact confirms the premise that the SLOs build on each other and should be considered a positive outcome.

The translation assignment: The translation assignment was the least well executed of the instruments, and the approach to it needs to be revised to gain useful information from this assignment. The potential gain for student understanding seems strong enough to keep it, so the author will incorporate changes. See proposed changes, below.

The focus group gathering: This event provided a venue to share what they had learned during the eight weeks, to verbalize how they felt the curriculum equipped them, and to give a self-assessment of their readiness to handle Bible translation issues in the church. It became a rich source of data for assessment of all three SLOs. In fact, this source of qualitative data helped interpret other qualitative data, reminding the author that written tests or other assignments are not always the best way to assess aptitudes,

attitudes, or skills. The participants overall revealed good understanding, new openness to translations, excitement about the applicability of the curriculum, and thoughtfulness and humility on the subject of Bible translation.

Survey: The anonymous Likert survey was an even richer source of noteworthy data than the author expected, particularly around the information about English translations that students were using, and how that connected to other data in the survey. The students did not reveal their preferences toward certain versions or approaches during the class time gatherings, so the survey was extremely useful in uncovering that data. The survey results in fact showed that presumed anti-NIV students were sharing the same classroom with at least one "anti-any-translation except the NIV" student, but none of this was openly stated during class time. It was only in the analysis of the data much later that the author realized that the curriculum was helping students work toward unity even among this group.   Certainly the post-curricular data would not have been nearly as remarkable if all of the research had been conducted as a posttest only. Of note is how remarkably similar the outcomes from the anonymous Likert scale survey were to the identifiable data streams for SLO 1 and SLO 2. One final note: the author was not anticipating to be able to easily analyze and draw conclusions from the combined results of the anonymous and identifiable data; the outcomes from each data stream resulted in unambiguous conclusions.

Proposed curriculum changes

Based on the inability of some students to reach proficiency for SLO 1 and SLO 3, the author would propose incorporating more checks into student comprehension

through graded reading comprehension assignments, weekly review assignments, or quizzes. By addressing these foundational issues geared toward SLO 1, and incorporating more accountability, the students may better grasp the material needed to reach proficiency for both SLO 1 and SLO 3.

The lack of success of the two-translation assignment demands a radical overhaul in executing it. One idea is to include more in-class reading from some alternative translations that are somewhat less jarring than, for example, a Manga version; perhaps the NIrV. (In fact, the child development expert who is a consultant to the NIrV lives nearby and could be a guest speaker.) Whatever the case, the poor results from this assignment suggest this: in order to move students beyond a passive understanding of translation approaches, the author must give better information (focusing efforts toward SLO 1), incorporate more examples, and, most importantly, incorporate more practice in the curriculum. Other ideas include incorporating an assignment that has students looking at semantic-domain dictionaries, adding an in-class look at English-usage research, and assigning students non-word-focused translation assignments already in semester three—since students perhaps get more settled into their wooden style as they translate the longer discourses in semester three. Along with incorporating changes in preparation for this assignment, the author will add more detail to the instructions. For example, the author could require that students write a more detailed translation brief that accompanies the second translation, and hand that in ahead of time for review. The requirements could include writing a paragraph to explain how their translation meets the requirements of the brief. This upgrade in assignment instruction along with the ideas above would hopefully lead to better results.

Focus group changes: The author will add a question to the focus group about if and how the students' initial foray into Greek impacted their use of English translations. The revelation from the anonymous data that a high percentage of the class used the ESV was unexpected; perhaps this is reflective of students who attend Kuyper College, but no data has been collected in the past to substantiate this. Two students in the focus group revealed that their churches had switched from the NIV to the ESV for church use, so perhaps the use of the ESV by so many students was reflecting a broader trend.

The author will likely add a question for the focus group that pushes students to speak about the issues in international Bible translation that were brought up in the lecture. Only a couple of oblique references to international Bible translation issues had been brought up by students during the focus group gathering, even though it was highlighted (and listed on the screen) as a point of discussion.

Unexpected results

One unexpected theme that came out in class discussion, and formally in the focus group, was the apologetic use of the information that students were learning in the curriculum. During the focus group interaction, four students described their connections with skeptics, non-Christians, and doubting, nominal Christians, and shared how they were already having profitable discussions that came out of the translation studies curriculum topics. (In fact, two students shared that this unit radically changed how they themselves view or understand the Bible—a sort of an apologetic for them.) Specifically, two students mentioned having "starting text" discussions with acquaintances who were skeptical about manuscripts and "alterations" to the Bible. One other student was

engaging an acquaintance on the topic of the human authorship of the Bible alongside the topic of the infallibility of the Bible. Another student shared, "Just recently one of my friends who studied religion and spirituality in a secular context was talking about this article and about how it time-lined how many times the Bible has been edited and changed and how the integrity of the text has been lost." This student was able to dialogue intelligently on the subject and offer insights to this acquaintance. One student commented that the curriculum helped them gain a new perspective so that they are "not seeing the variety of texts and the variety of translations as a problem, but more seeing it as an opportunity to gain a richer understanding of the biblical text," and that they were then sharing that perspective with questioners. So while the students were processing the material for the curriculum goals—to understand the full spectrum of translation issues in order to keep unity and pastorally resolve conflicts in the church—they were also processing the material in relation to the people in their lives who had fundamental questions and doubts about the integrity of the Bible, about manuscript issues, authorship issues, or translation concerns.

Further studies

The educational strategies and curriculum design used in this course could be utilized in other higher education settings, either at the undergraduate level or in seminaries. The author plans to write a short version of this curriculum that is slated for various venues, including a continuing education class sponsored by Calvin College geared for older adults and for church education settings. Also under consideration are articles or papers that focus on educational strategy for formation of ministry-minded

194

students at Christian colleges, or papers more generally on the theology of translation. Another question that could be explored is whether the study of biblical languages moves those students toward stronger opinions about preferred approaches to translations. Research could also be conducted with the participating Greek students in their settings post graduation to investigate if the curriculum is still affecting attitudes and skills for ministry.

The author also plans to continue to implement the curriculum in fourth-semester Greek to prepare ministry leaders, and to collect data, with permission of Kuyper College's IRB. The driving forces behind the implementation of this curriculum were the author's own experience of helping others overcome conflict around Bible translation issues, and the call of people like Dave Brunn and David Neff for ministry leaders to maintain unity in the church around Bible translation issues (see chapter one). Similar to New Testament theologian Gordon Fee, the author needed to continually recite the "practice what you preach" mantra, and display restraint and hospitality when talking with students about implications of translation choices that the author would consider less than desirable. [4] In the end, the curriculum, the modeling, and requiring students to practice applying the information resulted in a Translation Studies unit that resonated with students and was highly effective for informing and equipping them. The students learned to accept the complexity of translation, became more open to a variety of translation options—which will presumably affect their teaching and preaching—and learned to interact thoughtfully and respectfully with others about these topics. These curriculum changes in fourth-semester Greek at Kuyper College have enabled the

---

[4] Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2013) 13.

students to move toward the goal of becoming the thoughtful voice, the educator, the unifier, and the grace-filled presence in the church as they navigate the various translation issues that come their way in ministry.

Informed Consent Form

For: Greek 204 students who want to participate in Prof. Hoogeboom's doctoral research project

Title of the Project: Translation Studies for Ministry Leaders: Implementing Foundational Translation Principles in an Advanced New Testament Greek Curriculum

Purpose of the Project: This project entails incorporating principles from translation studies into the second-year New Testament Greek curriculum and then studying the effects of the curriculum on students' knowledge of Bible translation issues, attitudes towards the Bible and translation issues, and beliefs about the Bible, as well as on students' self-perceptions of preparedness for handling any of these issues in ministry.

Procedures: For the unit of study, you will be required to participate in the learning and assessment of learning as appropriate for a college-level class. You are then invited to participate further 1) by filling out the questionnaire before and after our unit on translation studies, 2) by allowing me to use your answers from clearly-marked, designated test questions and homework questions as part of the data collection, and 3) by being part of the focus group after completion of the unit.

If you do not participate, it will not negatively affect your grade in any way. If you do not want any of your information used in the research, then leave this consent form blank.

Risks: This study qualifies as a "minimal risk" study since the discomfort anticipated would not be more than that encountered in a typical Kuyper College class that wrestles with issues of theology and has routine assignments, tests, and discussions. There will be no violation of rights to privacy, because confidentiality will be a high priority.

Confidentiality: Procedures to maintain confidentiality:

1. You will use personal unique identifiers instead of names on the quantitative questions; these questions are aimed at attitudes towards the Bible and towards Bible translations.
2. Names would only be required for responses that are connected to a grade, but again, names would not be published (see #3. below), and materials kept confidential and securely stored in a locked container, in a locked room. Comments made during the focus group meeting(s) will also be kept confidential, and any notes or transcriptions will also be securely stored.
3. No social data (e.g., gender, ethnic background, religious affiliation, academic major) beyond "Kuyper College student preparing for ministry" and similar

variations would ever be used in published material.   Participants will be referred to as "students" in the plural or "one individual/two individuals" etc. when writing about various data.

Benefits: Educational benefits for students include better preparation to answer tough questions in ministry about the Bible and its inspiration and infallibility, about the origins of the biblical text, and about the various approaches to translations of the Bible. Potential non-participants who would benefit include church leaders and laity whom the participants may interact with in the future, as well as people involved in Bible translation projects around the world who may look to participants as mediators between interested parties (funders, publishers, etc.)

I would invite you to contact me about final outcomes in the published material, anticipated in May of 2017.

Your signature on this form indicates that this study has been explained to you, that you understand the information presented, and that you want to participate in the study. You understand the participation is **voluntary**, and that you may withdraw at any time. **Questions are encouraged**, and you may contact me with questions at any time.

_____

Signature of participant

_____

Signature of investigator

Contact information: lhoogeboom@kuyper.edu

Anonymous Survey & Questionnaire for Greek 204 Students
This questionnaire is designed to assess your knowledge of, attitudes toward, and beliefs about the Bible and its various translations. This study is being conducted by Lisa Hoogeboom, Associate Professor at Kuyper College, with the intention of publishing the information as part of a doctoral thesis at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. By filling out the questionnaire before and after the unit on translation studies, you will help Professor Hoogeboom determine how the unit affects your knowledge of, attitudes toward, and beliefs about the Bible and its translations. Please be assured that all of your answers will be kept strictly confidential. The information that you provide will be presented only in summary form, in combination with the responses of other participants in this study. The answers that you give will never be linked with your name (and in fact cannot, as this survey is tagged with your own personal unique identifier, not your name.) By completing this questionnaire, you have given your consent that you are a voluntary participant in this study.

Personal Unique Identifier

To create your unique identifier, please fill in the following spaces with the requested information.

What are the **last three numbers** of your cell phone number? (If you do not have a cell phone, use the last three digits of your home phone number.)	
What is the **number form of the month in which your oldest sibling** was born? (If YOU are the oldest sibling, use the number form of the month of the second-oldest sibling's birth. If you are an only child, use your own birth month.) Example: January=01 OR October =10	

Please complete the following questions to the best of your ability.

Over the course of my whole life, the English Bible version I used the most is
In the recent past, the English Bible version I use the most is
Other English versions I am happy to consult include

Circle the answer that best reflects your own views.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. I am aware of the various groupings (or families) of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
2. I am aware of the history of KJV (King James Version.)	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
3. I believe that nouns in Bible translations (e.g., **Jews, slaves,** or **wives**) have direct, one-to-one transferability from the original language and culture to the receptor language and culture.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
4. I am able to explain the various ways that translators approach translation, such as word-for-word and thought-for-thought.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
5. I am able to explain foreignization and domestication in translation.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
6. The Bible content written in the original Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic is the inspired word of God.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
7. The pre-written oral tradition of the Bible passed down from generation to generation in proto-Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek were the inspired word of God.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
8. The Bible content as written in English (or any other home language) is the inspired word of God.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
9. The only legitimate approach in the translation of the Bible is to substitute one original-language word with one target-language word.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
10. The only legitimate approach in the translation of the Bible is to work toward the clearest transfer of meaning.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
11. The Bible in sign language is the inspired word of God.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
12. I will likely be using multiple versions of the Bible in ministry.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
13. I will encourage parishioners to accept and use multiple versions of the Bible.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
14. In my ministry, I would be comfortable telling someone not to purchase a particular English Bible translation.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

If you circled 3, 4, or 5 in the last question (14), please list which Bible translations you would not recommend.

Likert Survey Data

SLO 1

Student	Q1 FEB	Q1 APR	Q2 FEB	Q2 APR	Q3 FEB	Q3 APR	Q4 FEB	Q4 APR	Q5 FEB	Q5 APR
A	2	4	3	4	2	2	3	5	1	5
B	4	5	4	4	2	2	4	5	3	5
C	1	5	2	5	2	2	4	5	1	5
D	5	5	1	5	3	5	4	4	3	5
E	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	5
F	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	5
G	2	5	3	4	4	2	4	4	3	5
H	2	5	1	5	1	1	2	5	1	4
I	2	5	5	5	3	2	2	5	1	5
J	2	5	4	5	2	1	2	4	2	5
K	1	5	4	5	2	1	4	5	1	5

SLO 2, *Word of God*

Student	Q 6 FEB	Q 6 APR	Q 7 FEB	Q7 APR	Q8 FEB	Q8 APR	Q11 FEB	Q11 APR
A	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
B	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4
C	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
D	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
E	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4
F	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
G	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
H	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
I	5	5	1	5	5	5	5	3
J	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5
K	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

SLO 2, *Legitimate Approaches*

Student	Q9 FEB	Q9 APR	Q10 FEB	Q10 APR
A	1	1	2	1
B	2	1	3	1
C	1	1	3	1
D	4	2	1	1
E	3	2	4	2
F	2	1	2	1
G	2	1	4	4
H	2	1	5	2
I	2	2	5	2
J	1	1	2	2
K	1	1	1	1

SLO 2, *Use in Ministry*

Student	Q12 FEB	Q12 APR	Q13 FEB	Q13 APR	Q14 FEB	Q14 APR
A	5	5	5	5	3	2
B	5	5	5	5	4	3
C	5	5	5	5	4	2
D	2	4	4	5	2	3
E	4	4	5	5	3	2
F	4	5	4	5	5	5
G	4	5	4	5	3	2
H	4	5	4	4	2	1
I	5	5	5	5	5	5
J	5	5	5	5	5	3
K	4	5	5	5	4	2

SLO 2, *Open-ended Questions*

	Current English Bible version, most-used	*Past English Bible version, most-used*	*Other versions happy to consult include…* Before Curriculum	*Other versions happy to consult include…* After Curriculum	*Tell someone not to purchase*: Before Curriculum	*Tell someone not to purchase*: After Curriculum
i.	**ESV**	NIV	NASB, NKJV, NLT	NASB, NLT, NIV, almost every other English version	KJV, The Message	--
ii.	**ESV**	NIV	NASB, NKJV, NLT	NASB, NIV	The Message, Voice, Amplified Bible	The Message
iii.	**ESV**	NIV	NASB	NASB, NKJV	The Message, NLT	The Message, NLT
iv.	**ESV**	NIV	--	--	KJV	--
v.	**ESV**	NIV	KJV/NKJV, NASB, Holman's	KJV/NKJV, NASB, Holman's, NIV	The Message	--
vi.	**ESV**	NIV	NASB, NLT	NASB, NLT, HCSB	The Message	The Message
vii.	**ESV**	ESV	KJV/NKJV	KJV/NKJV, NIV	NIV/TNIV	--
i.	**NIV**	NIV	ESV	ESV	--	--
ii.	**NIV**	NIV	NLT	Any	--	--
iii.	**NIV**	NIV	NLT, NRSV, NIrV, ESV	NLT, NIrV, ESV, The Message, etc.	--	--
iv.	**NIV**	NIV	NASB	NASB, NLT, ESV	The Street Bible	--

APPENDIX D

TEST: ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. a) List the main components of a Pauline letter in the order they normally appear, b) give a little extra detail on the components of ONE of those parts, AND
   c) explain why we (should) care about NT letter structure.

2. Respond to the following scenario:
   Jeremy comes to you because his young daughter just started attending a Christian school which uses the KJV English Bible for devotions and Bible memory. He's wondering if you could a. Give him insights into a bit of the backstory of the KJV and b. Get your opinion about the KJV.

3) Respond to the following scenario:
   Rebecca heard Bart Ehrman speak, then perused one of his best-selling books. She's attending a secular college which has challenged her conservative Christian foundation to the core. She's confused and having doubts about the origins of the biblical text, which she had earlier in her life imagined as a unified, unchanging text. She comes to you looking for some truth and clarity about this. How might you respond in a way that is both pastoral as well as informative?

4) Can we "get" the "word of God" through a translation? Give a comprehensive defense of your answer.

5) How does ideology or "unconscious loyalties" affect Bible translation and our understanding of the Bible today?

6) Answer the question, "Why do they keep changing my Bible?" in four ways AND explain one of those ways in full detail.

APPENDIX E

HOLISTIC RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF ALL ARTIFACTS FOR SLOs 1, 2, 3

SLO 1:

Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge of key concepts from the translation studies curriculum.

Exceeds standards	Proficient/Meets standards	Approaching standards	Below standards	Knowledge
Correctly identifies and understands all or nearly all of the key concepts RE starting text	Correctly identifies and understands a majority of the key concepts RE starting text	Correctly identifies some of the key concepts but demonstrates misunderstanding of others RE starting text	Fails to correctly identify most key concepts, inaccurately and inappropriately refers to concepts RE starting text	SLO 1.1
Correctly identifies and understands all or nearly all of the key concepts RE general approaches to translation	Correctly identifies and understands a majority of the key concepts RE general approaches to translation	Correctly identifies some of the key concepts but demonstrates misunderstanding of many RE general approaches to translation	Fails to correctly identify most key concepts, inaccurately and inappropriately refers to concepts RE general approaches to translation	SLO 1.2
Correctly identifies and understands all or nearly all of the key concepts RE the complexities of communication	Correctly identifies and understands a majority of the key concepts RE the complexities of communication	Correctly identifies some of the key concepts but demonstrates misunderstanding of many RE the complexities of communication	Fails to correctly identify most key concepts, inaccurately and inappropriately refers to concepts RE the complexities of communication	SLO 1.3
Correctly identifies and understands all or nearly all of the key concepts RE how ideology affects translation	Correctly identifies and understands a majority of the key concepts RE how ideology affects translation	Correctly identifies some of the key concepts but demonstrates misunderstanding of many RE how ideology affects translation	Fails to correctly identify most key concepts, inaccurately and inappropriately refers to concepts RE how ideology affects translation	SLO 1.4

SLO 2:

Students will display openness toward a wide range of Bible translations and translation options.

Exceeds standards	Proficient/Meets standards	Approaching standards	Below standards	
Successfully identifies the complexity and nuances, values multiple translation options	Successfully identifies some of the complexity, shows some openness to multiple options	Identifies some of the complexity, fails to show openness to multiple options	Fails to show comprehension of complexity of translation, devalues translation options	SLO 2: Attitude

SLO 3:

Students will demonstrate the ability to respond to translation questions or conflicts knowledgeably and with respect.

Exceeds standards	Proficient/Meets standards	Approaching standards	Below standards	
Consistently demonstrates respectful, thoughtful interaction, uses accurate information, shows humility, sensitivity, hospitality toward people	Demonstrates some thoughtful interaction, uses mostly accurate information, shows some humility, hospitality toward people	Uses some accurate information, but fails to demonstrate thoughtful interaction, humility, hospitality	Fails to exhibit thoughtful interaction, uses inaccurate information, lacks humility and hospitality	SLO 3: Skill

Appendix F

A Defense of Translations

The Bible itself reveals:

1. **A God who wants to communicate**
- Jesus described as the "Word;" mouthpiece of God
- From John: Jesus is God's message to you; he is revealing what the Father is about; he IS God, but sent in a way that you could understand
- Expressing God in both WORD and in actions

A Defense of Translations

The Bible itself reveals:

2. **3 languages used**
- Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek
- Lingua franca; heart language
- Aramaic: Daniel 2-7, Ezra 4-6, Ezra 7:12-26

A Defense of Translations

The Bible itself reveals:

3. **Translation is utilized within scripture itself**
- Translation within the Bible: Mark 5:41, 15:34
- A Translation of OT Hebrew (Greek Septuagint) is used by NT authors
  - Mark 7:7, 2 Cor. 6:16
- Gospels: Greek translation of the Aramaic speakers. (continued on next slide.)

Jesus, the Gospels, and Translation

- What language(s) did he speak?
- With his disciples? Aramaic.
- What language did the Gospel writers use to record these interactions? Greek.
- The point: the inspired written Greek was once Aramaic. Our Gospels record a translation of Jesus' words and teachings.
  - So... we don't have the exact words of Jesus or disciples, etc. Reactions?

A Defense of Translations

The Bible itself reveals

4. **Diversity of people within the plan of God**

   OT: Genesis 12, Rahab, Ruth, Uriah, Naaman, Ninevites, Cyrus?

   NT: Matthew 1 and 28, Revelation 5 and 7

Point: Language differences are not barriers for God

God's amazing plan

- The spoken, then the written words are TRANSLATABLE across cultures and languages!
  - Not always easy, though
  - Example: Languages without the past tense or future tense (Mandarin Chinese)
  - Example: Languages that are averse to participles (English)

To help our perspective…

- According to Islamic scholars, the Qur'an cannot be translated and be considered the true word of God

---

More ministry setting questions:

- Why so many different versions?
  - "I love my old translation!"
- The KJV is superior/Why would anyone use the KJV?
- Why do the NIV and other Bible translations keep changing? On what grounds are such changes made? ("Capitulation to culture!")
- Is it OK to read "The Message" paraphrase?
- What craziness is going on in BT around the world?

Why so many variations? Overview:

1. Translators have <u>different starting points</u>: text variations
2. Translation teams have <u>different approaches or philosophies</u> that are geared for different audiences with different needs.
3. Translators are dealing with <u>complexities of language</u>: "cognitive context" to consider; aiming at a moving target: language usage of readers changes over time (to the uninitiated young person, coveting someone else's "ox or ass" takes on a whole new meaning!), , and new understanding of words, concepts, and discourse in the start text can occur due to new understanding of cultural or literary context.

Definitions, Oral tradition and ancient authorship,
Writing traditions, Text types,
Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint intro, Inspiration

THE STARTING TEXT: TEXTUAL CRITICISM, TRANSLATION, AND MINISTRY

Why so many variations/versions?

1. **Translators have <u>different starting points</u>**: text variations

   o The *original* original no longer exists.
   o Copyists (scribes) would make mistakes (or even add things, perhaps in the margins)
   o There are lots of old Bible manuscripts (5, 600 for NT), many uncovered in the last 100 years. Since there are slight variations, careful study needs to happen to determine *the most accurate* starting point.

   [Amazing how close they all are!]

Why so many variations?

1. Different starting points
For example, the KJV NT versus almost all other versions

16th-century gathering of newer Greek copies
[KJV]

Versus

19th-21-st century gathering of older (therefore theoretically closer to the original) Greek copies
[Almost all other English translations]

John 5:3-5

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered,
waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years .   KJV

3 A great number of sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed people were lying in these walkways.

5:5 Now a man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years.
NET

Why so many variations?

1. Different starting points
Another example: I Thess. 2:7

As apostles of Christ we certainly had a right to make some demands of you, but instead we were like children[b] among you. Or we were like a mother feeding and caring for her own children.   NLT

Instead, we were like young children[a] among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, 8 so we cared for you.
NIV

7 But we were [g]gentle[5] among you, [h]like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.   English Standard Version

---

Textual Criticism="Lower Criticism"

- What is textual criticism?
   the study of copies of a written work
   of which the autograph is unknown
   with the goal of assembling the most accurate   text
- "Autograph"=the first, original edition
- More than one "original edition" for a book? Perhaps. E.g., short version, long version of a letter, like a longer and a shorter version of Mark or Romans, or two versions of Acts.

Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 173.

P 46/Chester Beatty

- Date: **175-225** A.D.
- Contents: most of Pauline letters (not Timothy or Titus) Missing pages of Romans, Thessalonians, and possibly Philemon

---

The Starting Text: Textual Criticism

- Textual Criticism is a first step in translation
   o Copyists/ scribes might make mistakes (or even add things, perhaps in the margins)
   o Therefore there are tiny as well as more substantial variations.
   o Many mss have been uncovered in the last 100+ years.
   o Careful study needs to happen to determine *the most accurate* starting point.

Hebrew

Greek

Slide 1

Why do we care about "starting text" issues?

1. We need to understand them in order to assure our parishioners about the stability and validity of the biblical text

- "Why footnotes in our Bibles?" or brackets?
- Bart Ehrman's popular books
- VIDEO: Bart Ehrman
- Discussion: How do we respond to parishioners who come with questions because they read/hear these?

Slide 2

Why do we care about "starting text" issues?

- Points of assurance to parishioners
  - Only 5% of the Bible has plausible variants
  - Over 1500 years and across the whole Mediterranean region? Amazing consistency considering they were written down during a dominant oral and performance-based era. (Consider the writings of Jesus! And 2 Peter 1:21)
  - Light years better than other ancient works
  - Most of the variants are insignificant; major doctrinal issues are not affected!
    - Jesus versus Jesus Christ
    - "the" in some, not in others
  - Even with the multitude of variants, "there is no aspect of theology seriously in doubt." Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 179.

Slide 3

Why do we care about "starting text" issues?

2. Helps us converse with KJV enthusiasts (Much more on this subject to come.)
3. Helps us determine sermon/Bible study material
4. Helps us understand and explain some of the updates in Bible translation.

Slide 4

Matt. 6:9-13

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.
KJV

So pray this way: Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored, may your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

NET (New English Tr)

Slide 5

John 5:3-5

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years .   KJV

3 A great number of sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed people were lying in these walkways.

5 Now a man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years.   NET

Slide 6

I John 5

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?
6 This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that bear record *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*
8 And there are three that bear *witness in earth,* the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.
KJV

5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.
6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.
7 For there are three that testify:
8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

NIV

A textual issue explored: Mark 16

- The oldest manuscripts of Mark leave off verse 9 to the end. Also, the style of the Greek is very different.
- Exercise: different Bibles utilize different options
  - Accept the later addition
  - Reject the later addition
  - Brackets, footnotes, different print, etc.

Mark 16: the ending

- The ending could be an invitation and challenge to the listeners:
  - Will you complete the story that has begun?
  - Will you participate in the plan?
  - Will you be a follower who embraces the gospel with boldness and seeks to understand who Jesus is?
  - Will you be a follower who "tells" or one who sits in silence? The time for silence is over!
- Literary Genre: *Gospel Tract* or *Missionary Tract?*
- *Preach from the longer ending?*
- *How might you explain this to an inquirer?*

Before the Written Text…

- Hearing-dominant culture
- Oral culture
  - Repetition
  - Patterns
  - Formulas

"Author" in the Ancient Context

- Oral traditions stem from a variety of "tradents" (priests, prophets like Anna and Simeon) whose task it is to carry on traditions
  - Eyewitnesses to events
  - Church leaders (confessions) who get trained
  - Song writers who poetically express experience

- "Authorities" and scribes together would be assemblers of oral traditions and/or other material
  - No intellectual property rights fights!

  Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 25ff.

Note about oral history of the OT

- The Hebrew language in the oldest manuscripts we have is not the Hebrew spoken by Abraham or Moses.
- The language would have changed over time as the oral traditions continued throughout the generations. The job of the "performer" was to communicate to the audience.
  - Communication was key! And so the language must adapt

  Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 32ff, 83-84, 92

From oral to written:
The task of scribes

- Copy texts exactly
- Transcribe oral recitations for the archive
- Compile texts together
- Update language of texts? Yes, sometimes this was part of their task, just as in the oral tradition.
- Helps us understand the DSS

- Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 32-44

DSS="Dead Sea Scrolls"

- 981 scrolls found in a cave in Palestine, 1946-1956. 40% are OT mss.
- 3rd-oldest OT mss (300-100 BC; 1st and 2nd are fragments)
- Jeremiah: 2 similar, but different versions
  - NT? Mark, Acts, Romans?
- http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/home
- http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=96667&xtid=443 39&loid=127270

Septuagint

- Greek translation of the OT
- Many translators, many styles/philosophies of translation
- Wording that does not line up with the current Hebrew text
- Used more often in NT quotes than the other main text tradition
- Augustine on this topic
- More on the Septuagint later

Exercise

Psalm 14:3, according to the Masoretic Text:

- All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. (Psalm 14:3 – KJV)

Psalm 14:3, according to the Septuagint:
They are all gone out of the way, they are together become good for nothing, there is none that does good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.
(Psalm 14:3 – LXX)

Romans 3, where the apostle Paul quotes directly from **Psalm 14**:

All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." 13 "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips."14 "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 ruin and misery mark their ways, 17 and the way of peace they do not know."

The point:

- The NT authors used *at least 2 different text or manuscript traditions* when quoting the OT: the MT and the Septuagint
  - Discussion:
  - Their view of holy scripture?
  - Any implications for the baseline OT text today?
  - Any implications for the baseline NT text today?

Discussion: So what is inspiration?

- Inspired at every stage?
- Can we trust that the Holy Spirit was behind all these processes?
- "God-breathed"… "and _useful_ for teaching…"
  - Implications?
  - Orthodoxy: The "autograph" is the only inspired
  - No access to inspired?
- Question as we progress: Is the goal of textual criticism even valid?

Writing in the Ancient World

- For the educated
- Lists on potshards
- A whole industry
- Expensive for long documents

Papyrus
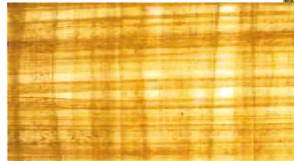
Papyrus

Popular through the 3rd century AD

Used until the 7th century

Papyrus scrolls are numbered in order as they are discovered.

Parchment/Vellum

What? Animal skin (vellum=young calf skin)

Popular from the 4th century on

More durable than papyrus

More expensive than papyrus

Writing utensils

- Reed (through 3rd century)
- Quill (from 3rd century on)

- Ink: octopus ink, vegetable/fruit juice, plant extracts

Scroll

Very few NT extant mss are from papyrus scrolls

Codex

A volume in book form

Easier to read and look up passages

Material:
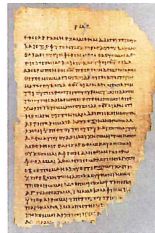Papyrus
OR
Vellum
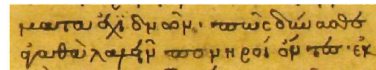OR
Paper (later)

Uncial Script

Greek capital letters

Oldest manuscripts use it—up to 9th cent.

Note:
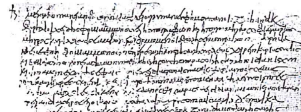"Uncial mss" are the non-papyri mss which use uncial letters

Minuscule script

Note: Greek handwriting and dates

- Dating of manuscripts is based on handwriting style when compared with other early Greek writings.
- Scholars agree this is accurate to at least within 50 years. (Some argue for a much smaller margin of error in the ability to date something.)

Greek Punctuation: Scriptio Continua

- ACLASSICALSTYLEOFWRITINGWIT HOUTSPACESBETWEENWORDSOR SENTENCES
- In other words: no punctuation

Other terms

- Palimpsest
  - Parchment scraped and used over again
  - 50 NT mss are palimpsests
    - Codex Z

- "nomina sacra":
  - sacred names were abbreviated with the first and last letters
  - $\Theta\Sigma$, $K\Sigma$, $I\Sigma$

Other terms

- Folio
  - A single sheet of paper, folded once to make 4 pages
  - OR a single page
  - OR a whole manuscript which contains folded sheets
- Quire
  - 4 sheets of paper which form 16 pages
  - OR a full section in a book (today, 24-25 sheets)

Other terms

- Gloss
  - Brief, written explanation in the margin or in between lines

  - Some written in a different hand

  - Some migrated into the text

Explanation of "text type" for NT Greek mss

- As copies were made of the various NT documents, those copies were brought around the Mediterranean area and new copies were made.
- Some with alterations would have been copied some more
- Today scholars can study a given manuscript and recognize its closely-related "cousins" among the manuscript traditions.
- Scholars call the related mss "text types."

What is "text type"?

- The closely-related "cousins" among NT Greek manuscripts have often (but not always) been found geographically near each other, thus geography labels:
  - Alexandrian text-type (Egypt/Sinai)
  - Western text-type (North Africa to the west)
  - Byzantine text type (Northeast Mediterranean)
  - [Caesarean text type; some dispute on this type]

Alexandrian text type

- These mss tend to be shorter and have more abrupt and difficult readings
- Almost all the papyri (therefore tends to be older) that have been found are linked to the Alexandrian text type
- P 52, A.D. 125

Oldest NT text that exists: AD 125 (25+ years after written?)

From: the Gospel of John, 18:31-33, 37-38
Dating of this has been a huge debate, but the early date advocates have been winning in recent years.

P 46/Chester Beatty

- Date: **175-225** A.D.
- Contents: most of Pauline letters (not Timothy or Titus) Missing pages of Romans, Thessalonians, and possibly Philemon

P 45-47, aka, Chester Beatty Papyri

- AD 180-200 (Paul); 208 pages total; 60 of them are housed at U of Mich.
- AD 250 (portions of Gospels and Acts; 30 pages total)
- AD 300 (Revelation)

P 66

- Gospel of John
- 175-200 A.D.
- No "adulteress" passage

Bodmer– P 75

Alexandrian text type

- The oldest Uncials are also linked to the Alexandrian text type, e.g.:
- Sinaiticus
  - 300's on parchment (325-360)
  - Found at St. Catherine's monastery in Egypt around 1850
- Vaticanus
  - 300's on vellum (Constantine had ordered it. Sources were probably in Alexandria.)
  - OT + NT
  - OT=Septuagint (an early rendition) and includes some apocryphal books; various text types
  - NT= all Alexandrian text type

Codex Sinaiticus (**350 A.D.**)

Alexandrian text type

- This text type was also found far from the Egyptian region
- About 30 mss total, and several of these are also "late" (showing that this tradition survived over the years.)
- The UBS5 and NA 28 use an eclectic Greek version which is most closely connected to this text type
- Tends to be fewer words

Western text type

- Matches the old Latin translation
- A couple of papyri fragments
- Quotes from Cyprian, Tertullian, and Iranaeus used this text
- 5th-century Gospels and Acts (C. Bezae)
- A couple of 6th and 9th century mss
- Tends to paraphrase and add from outside sources

Byzantine text type

- Aka "majority text"
- Underlies (but not exactly the same as) the "Textus Receptus" which is foundational to the KJV
- Earliest: 5th-century Gospels (C. Alexandrinus)
- Earliest quote from this text type is from Chrysostom (4th century)

Codex Alexandrinus

Byzantine text type

- Smoother Greek
- Less differences between the synoptic Gospels
- Later, but larger number of mss
- Codex Alexandrinus: only the Gospels are Byzantine; the rest is Alexandrian text type
- KJV
- NT of the Greek Orthodox Church (Their OT is LXX.)

Other important mss for the NT

- **Diatessaron:** the four New Testament Gospels compiled as a single narrative (a "harmony") by Tatian, about AD 150. It was the standard Syriac text for 250 years.
- "Itala": Old Latin Bible, 5th century

So WHY are there differences in the manuscripts?

Potential Issues for Scribes/Copyists:

UNINTENTIONAL changes: Eye errors, ear errors, mind/memory errors

INTENTIONAL changes: harmony, doctrinal, historical corrections, grammar corrections

---

Unintentional: Eye Errors

Keep in mind: Scriptio Continua

- **GODISNOWHERE**
- **GODISNOWHERE**
- **GODISNOWHERE**

Unintentional Changes: Eye Errors

- 2 Peter 2:13: Letter Confusion
- "...reveling...
ΕΝΤΑΙΣ**ΑΓΑΠΑΙΣ**ΑΥΤΩΝ [ἐν ταῖς ἀγαπαις αὐτων]
    ...in their love feasts"
ΕΝΤΑΙΣ**ΑΠΑΤΑΙΣ**ΑΥΤΩΝ [ἐν ταῖς ἀπαταις αὐτων]
    ...in their deceptions/pleasures" (most English translations)

Errors of the Eye

- I John 2:23: Homoiteleuton: "same ending"

...τόν πατέρα ἔχει· ὁμολογῶν
...the Father has;   the one confessing

τόν υἱόν καί τόν πατέρα ἔχει. ὑμεις....
    the Son also has the Father.   You all....

...τόν πατέρα ἔχει, ὑμεις....

   ...the Father has; You all....

Eye Errors

- Transposition/Metathesis
...αὐτὸν ἔλαβον....
    They took him

   ....αὐτὸν ἔβαλὸν
    They threw him

Eye Errors

- Haplography and Dittography
- I Thess 2:7
- ἐγεννηθήμεν ἤπιοι ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν
  - "we became gentle among you"
- ἐγεννηθήμεν νήπιοι ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν
  - "we became babes among you"

Ear Errors

- εἰρήνην ἔχομεν προς τὸν θεον
  - "..we have peace with God"
- εἰρήνην ἔχωμεν προς τὸν θεον
  - "...let us have peace with God..."

Mind/memory Errors

- Scribe writes according to something memorized; may be unconscious changes
- Lord's prayer?

Intentional Changes

- Grammar Corrections: Rev. 1:4

χάρις ὑμιν καὶ εἰρήνεη ἀπὸ ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ἐρχόμενος.

χάρις ὑμιν καὶ εἰρήνεη ἀπὸ θεοῦ, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ἐρχόμενος.

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne--NIV

Intentional Changes

- Harmony Issues
  - Especially in the Gospels
  - Lord's prayer (longer form in Matthew is put into Luke)
- Historical Issues
  - Mark 1:2a; "in Isaiah the prophet" vs. "in the prophets"
- Doctrinal/theological Issues
  - Adding "and fasting" to "prayer"
  - Taking out "servant" as a title for Paul

"Rules" for Scholars Doing NT Textual Criticism

The driving question: What is the best baseline NT Greek text from which the world writes their translations?

2 main things to consider
1. **External Evidence** (Age, distributions, etc.)
2. **Internal Evidence** (What seems like the more likely original reading based on what we know about transcription, based on themes and content of the writing, etc.?)

Factors in NT Textual Criticism

External Evidence overview:
  - a. Dates
  - b. Quantity
  - c. Text type
  - d. Geographic distribution

Dates

"Even within the period that runs from c. A.D. 100-300 it is possible for paleographers to be more specific on the relative date of the papyrus manuscripts of the New Testament. **For about sixty years now a tiny papyrus fragment of the Gospel of John has been the oldest "manuscript" of the New Testament. This manuscript (P52) has generally been dated to ca. A.D. 125.** This fact alone proved that the original Gospel of John was written earlier in the first century A.D., as had always been upheld by conservative scholars."

Duke University: Peter van Minnen

Factors in NT Textual Criticism

External Evidence overview:

    a. Dates

    b. Quantity: How many exist?

    c. Text type

    d. Geographic distribution

Text type valuation

Most scholars:

- Alexandrian=most value, most weight
- Western and Byzantine=lesser value

Exceptions: KJV enthusiasts, Greek and Eastern Orthodox tradition scholars, a few others around the world who consider the Byzantine the most valued

---

Factors in NT Textual Criticism

External Evidence overview:

    a. Dates

    b. Quantity

    c. Text type

    d. Geographic distribution

Factors in Textual Criticism:

Internal Evidence

1. *Lectio brevior:* shorter reading is more likely original

2. *Lectio difficilior*: the more difficult reading is more likely original

3. Unintentional changes: see above

4. Intentional changes: see above

5. Continuity/uniformity with rest of
    the book

Conclusion on Factors in Text Criticism

- The main question trying to be answered: Which reading best accounts for the rise of the other readings?

The 2 (main) Greek starting texts for current translations:

1. The Nestle-Aland (28th edition)
   - Many scholars together
   - Based in Germany
   - Uses the oldest mss
   - Uses a huge variety of mss; "eclectic text"
     - Incorporates Byz also
   - Has an extensive apparatus (footnotes)
   - The UBS (5th edition) is the same, but different apparatus

The 2 (main) Greek starting texts for current translations:

2. The Byzantine
   - "Byz" in the NA28 footnote/apparatus
   - A.k.a., Majority/M
   - Also uses a variety of mss
   - Greek Orthodox Church
   - **KJV**, NKJV use a variation of this

KJV: Why the love affair?

- Many reasons!
- One component: "Starting text" issues
- Byzantine text type vs. eclectic text
- Video: "What's the big deal about the KJV?" with Dr. Sam Gipp
- Video: Dr. James White: "Which Bible translation is the most reliable?"

Background Story: Gutenberg Printing Press

Background Story: Complutensian Polyglot

This was the first machine-printed edition of the Bible in which the text was presented in several languages **side by side.**

It presented the Old Testament in **Hebrew, Greek, and Latin** and the New Testament in **Greek and Latin.**

The project began in 1502 at a university in **Spain**. Printed in 1514. Published for sale in 1522.

The Pope, Erasmus, and a Publisher

Not to be outdone...**Pope Leo** gave **Erasmus** funding and the "OK" for a **Greek-Latin New Testament to be published for general use.**

Why NT only? Because it would be easier to carry, faster to publish, cheaper to publish, and be sold at a lower cost to the consumer than the CP!)

The publisher (Froben) wanted it done in 5 months.

$$$: SO NOW THE RACE IS ON!

Erasmus goes to work...

Because of the rush, Erasmus had access to only 6 Greek manuscripts, all late *Byzantine*. (12th century-ish)

There were a few scripture areas with NO Greek to work with, so Erasmus used the Latin and translated backward.

Erasmus was also pressured by RC authorities to borrow/add additional words from unreliable texts (most famously the I John 5 passage) even though he was convinced they were not original.

Erasmus's Greek text

- Erasmus's edition was a huge success, not so much because of the Latin (his first love), but because of the **Greek!**
- It beat the CP publishing date. AND it became a best-seller.
- Erasmus printed and published the first edition of the Greek NT in 1516. The 3rd edition of his text was particularly influential.
- **His last Greek edition was** used by the KJV translators **for their NT** (1604-1611, when published).

Textus Receptus: "Received Text"

- The term "Textus Receptus" comes from the publisher's preface to the **1633** KJV edition (**100 years after Erasmus's Greek collection**) produced by the Elzevirs, two brothers and printers who were market-savvy:

"textum ergo habes, nunc ab omnibus receptum, in quo nihil immulatum aut corruptum damus"

"so you hold the text, now received by all, in which nothing corrupt..."

TR and the "Majority" Text

- Textus Receptus is not exactly the same as the Majority text (e.g., I John 5...), as Erasmus had only 6 manuscripts, and there are many more that feed into the Majority text.
- The NKJV is mostly based on the TR, but has some influence from the Majority text.

Text of the "majority" in the first millennium
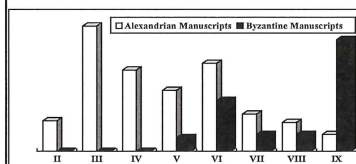
A side-note: *Textus Receptus*: 4th edition: Robert Estienne

Estienne edited Erasmus's edition and included footnotes about the manuscripts. The first *textual critical edition* of the Bible was born.

How big a deal are the differences between the KJV and the translations based on the eclectic, older text?

- Acts 9:5-6
- Rev. 22
- Trinity text

While there are many tiny differences, there are only about a dozen substantial differences.

Discussion: KJV= an appropriate translation?

Why so many variations? Overview:

1. Translators have <u>different starting points</u>: text variations
2. Translation teams have <u>different approaches or philosophies</u> that are geared for different audiences with different needs.
3. Translators are dealing with <u>complexities of language</u>: "cognitive context" to consider; aiming at a moving target: language usage of readers changes over time (to the uninitiated young person, coveting someone else's "ox or ass" takes on a whole new meaning!); , and new understanding of words, concepts, and discourse in the start text can occur due to new understanding of cultural or literary context.

Skopostheorie, Word versus Meaning-centered, Septuagint, Foreignization and Domestication

APPROACHES TO OR PHILOSOPHIES OF TRANSLATION

Why so many variations/versions?

2. Translation teams have different approaches or philosophies that are geared for different audiences with different needs

New term:

- **Skopostheorie:** defining the <u>purpose</u> (or *skopos*) of the translated text for intended audience in a prospectus or "brief" to guide the translation process; it gives information about the intended audience, the motives of the translation backers and translation team, and the medium chosen for the translation. What is known about the purpose of the source text is also a guide.
- Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*

Skopos and Translation

5 main driving questions to consider when laying out the *skopos*:

1) the (intended) text function(s)
    e.g. "accessible" or "emotional" or...
2) the target-text addressee(s)
    e.g., 3rd-grade level English speakers
3) the time and place of text reception
    e.g., North America in 10 years

Skopos and Translation

5 main driving questions to consider when laying out the *skopos*:

4) the medium over which the text will be transmitted
    e.g. graphic with minimal words
5) the motive for the production or reception of the text
    e.g., reach young people

- Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity,* 59-60.

Discussion

- Debates in your church setting?
- How can you promote descriptors beyond beyond "good" or "bad"?
- "Does this translation adequately meet its intended purpose and function?"

Why so many variations/versions?

2. Translation teams have different approaches or philosophies that are geared for different audiences with different needs.
 One element of "skopos" discussions:
- Word-focused vs. Meaning-focused
- Formal equivalence/approximation vs.
 Functional or Dynamic equivalence/approximation
- Formal vs. Free
- Structure-based vs. Meaning-based
- Semantic vs. Communicative
- Literal(ish) vs. Idiomatic

Brunn: pp. 130ff.

Word-focused translations
aka: "Formal equivalence/approximation"

Explanation: *Translators* pick one target-language word to replace one original Greek or Hebrew or Aramaic word *as much as possible*, and keep the word order as close as possible.   English examples: NASB, KJV
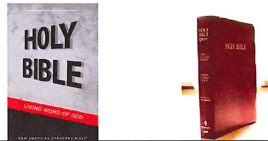
Meaning-focused translations

aka "functional equivalence/approximation" or
dynamic equivalence

Explanation:
Translators use intense study of word meaning and usage in the original text (including colloquialisms and historical context) AND in the language it's being translated into in order to determine the best word choices and phraseology to accurately convey the *meaning* of the original.

Examples: NLT, NIrV, Good News Translation (formerly Good news Bible
as well as Today's English Version)

Meaning-focused English translations

Eugene Nida... Cicero... Some Septuagint translators

Middle-of-the-road translations

Explanation: These translations try to balance the approaches, using a word–focused approach when possible, but not at the expense of clarity of meaning.

English examples: NRSV, NIV, NJB

NASB vs. NLT: Romans 4:1-3

NASB (word-focused):

- What then shall we say that Abraham, [a]our forefather according to the flesh, has found? 2 For if Abraham was justified [b]by works, he has something to boast about, but not [c]before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

NLT (meaning-focused):

- Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What did he discover about being made right with God? 2 If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. 3 For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith."

Word-focused translations

Gains:

- word repetition becomes clear (Although not always; e.g. "love")
- 2,000 years and many cultures separate us, so this kind of translation can help connote that separation of time and culture

Losses:

- do not as accurately portray meaning; no two languages can have an exact word-for-word transfer AND convey the same meaning because the connotations, inferences, and "cognitive frames" are different across time and cultures (more later)

Meaning-focused translations

Gains:

- meaning can be more accurately conveyed

Losses:

- for more difficult texts for which there might be disagreement, a certain interpretation may be inserted
- the reader loses the ability to see word repetition
- the translation can become unwieldy, or so wordy that it distracts from the main point
- The reader may forget the "distance" historically and culturally

---

Exercise: 2 Corinthians 10:13

ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τοῦ κανόνος οὗ ἐμέρισεν ἡμῖν ὁ θεὸς μέτρου, ἐφικέσθαι ἄχρι καὶ ὑμῶν.

But we will not boast the immeasurable things, but (will boast) according to the measure of the measuring ruler/device which God separated out for us, to arrive even up to you all.

(Interlinear style)

But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. KJV

Exercise: 2 Corinthians 10:13

But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you. ESV

We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you. NIV

Exercise: 2 Corinthians 10:13

- We will not boast about things done outside our area of authority. We will boast only about what has happened within the boundaries of the work God has given us, which includes our working with you. NLT

- So we will carefully limit our boasting to the extent only of what God has done in and through us, a reach that extends as far as you. The Voice

Cautions from Brunn

- Brunn: the term "literal" is unhelpful
- Brunn: there are NO English translations that can truly be considered "word-for-word"
- Why not? Because all translators realize that meaning is easily lost in attempting word-for-word.
  - See pages 74, 106, 118-119
  - Not the KJV, not the ESV, not the NASB
- (More on the slipperiness of words and meaning later)

Approaches to translation

- Discussion: Is one translation approach "right", and another "wrong"?
- If one translation is "good," are the other ones "bad"?

Approaches to translation

- Considering the *skopos*.
- **Example 1:**
  - A vibrant, communicative version...
  - For advanced English readers...
  - Using just text (not pictures or film)...
  - With a priority to convey the emotions of the text...
  - Other?

Approaches to translation

- Considering the *skopos*.
- **Example 2:**
  - A vibrant, communicative text
  - For 5-8 year old English speakers
  - Using words along with pictures
  - That highlights OT and NT narratives
  - Appropriate for a home or church-school setting

NIrV, from Zondervan website

Translation:	But I won't brag more than I should. Instead, I will brag only about what I have done in the area God has given me. It is an area that reaches all the way to you. 2 Corinthians 10:13 (NIrV)
Reading Level:	2.90
Readbility:	Very easy to read and understand; uses simple, short words and sentences
Number of Translators:	11 Translators, 40 including stylists and simplifiers
Translation Philosophy/Format:	Designed to help young children and new readers read and understand the Bible for themselves and create an easy stepping-stone from a children's Bible to an adult Bible. Translation Philosophy/Format Balance between a word-for-word translation and thought-for-thought, with an emphasis on meaning for simplification.

Approaches to translation: the Septuagint

- While some Septuagint translators strived to preserve the style and wording of the original, others prioritized the ***transfer of meaning*** to their Greek-speaking audience
- The flexibility shown by the Septuagint translators made sense in their context, for "in the cognitive environment of ancient oral culture, what the translators did was acceptable and legitimate."
- Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World*, 188.

A look at translation history: Septuagint

- Semantic innovation, the coinage of new words and expressions, and an expectations that new meanings may emerge for familiar words is a hallmark of the Septuagint language.

- Example: **'diaspora.'** This vocabulary word represents the translators' intensely creative way of melding and contemporizing their different thought worlds.

- Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 11, 162, 313.
- The term originated in the Septuagint (Deuteronomy 28:25) in the phrase *esē diaspora en pasais basileias tēs gēs* 'thou shalt be a dispersion in all kingdoms of the earth.' ("you shall flee")

A look at history: Septuagint

- Why consider the Septuagint?
  - The NT writers (and Jesus?) quote from it numerous times
  - Therefore *the various translation approaches become legitimized and canonized by the inspired authors*

- Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 193-194

Approaches to translation: 2 new terms

- **Foreignization:** translating a particular word, phrase, or literary element in such a way that the reader is reminded that this is literature from a different culture and different era

- **Domestication:** translating a particular word, phrase, or literary element in such a way that it seems familiar and is very relatable to the reader

- *Examples: whiter than snow;…..*
- Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 51ff
- Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation," 24ff.

Foreignization and *Domestication*

- Discussion: Gains and losses?

  - Domesticating=relatable
  - Foreignizing="overly tame" a difficult text (Venuti); can be a sharp constrast between the fluency of a domesticating text with the strangeness of the events in the text (de Jong)

Foreignization and *Domestication*

- Discussion: gains and losses?

  - Elements of *domestication* make the text accessible enough to the reader/listener, that the reader can make some sense of it

  - Elements of *foreignization* puts enough distance in the text to make the reader aware that there is an historical context, and so diminishes immediate transference of social categories (i.e., identity maps.)

Foreignization and *Domestication*

- Example: Esala on translating "priest" in his African context
  - Foreignizing attempts communicated an undesired Western idea
  - Domesticating attempts were associated with animist culture
  - "More often the team selected local terminology, as these choices would encourage the locals to see that Christ is Lord over their conceptual world."
  - Esala, "Implementing Skopostheorie," 306-309

Discussion of the *medium* or *form* in translation (#4 of the *skopos* questions)

- Are artistic renditions in catacombs, illuminated manuscripts, and stained-glassed windows a type of translation?

- By the 2nd century AD, translating biblical narratives into drawings and illustrations was established in both Judaism and Christianity.

http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=catacomb+paintings&view=detailv2&&id=503DA9E40D5A9A32787A77C67CE4F88D92427822&selectedIndex=0&ccid=Ev3KszMK&simid=608035119417852921&thid=OIP.M12fdcab3330a4e71d0856e25cf26bcf5o0&ajaxhist=0

Discussion of the *medium* or *form* in translation (#4 of the *skopos* questions)

- Is **sign language** a translation?
  - http://www.deafmissions.com/?PageID=29

- Are audio, film, graphic novel, live plays, television, movies legitimate forms of translation?
  - http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=kingstone+bible&&view=detail&mid=5FFF6AEEA42AF1ABF31C5FFF6AEEA42AF1ABF31C&rvsmid=541373D5735001961E9B&FORM=VDFSRV&fsscr=0

- What is the role of illustrations, dance, hymns, play in translation?

- If it's in a traditional book form, what should be considered? (Ghana example)

Issues in ministry:
Discussion on the philosophy and approach of *The Message* translation of the Bible

---
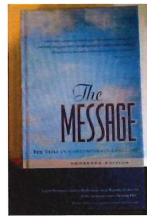
E.P.'s translation brief: "While I was teaching a class on Galatians, I began to realize that the adults in my class weren't feeling the vitality and directness that I sensed as I read and studied the New Testament in its original Greek. Writing straight from the original text, I began to attempt to bring into English the rhythms and idioms of the original language. I knew that the early readers of the New Testament were captured and engaged by these writings and I wanted my congregation to be impacted in the same way. I hoped to bring the New Testament to life for two different types of people: those who hadn't read the Bible because it seemed too distant and irrelevant and those who had read the Bible so much that it had become 'old hat.'"

---

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

NIV

13"Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.

The Message

---

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. *NIV*

14-16"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven. *The Message*

Why so many variations? Overview:

1. Translators have _different starting points_: text variations
2. Translation teams have _different approaches or philosophies_ that are geared for different audiences with different needs.
3. Translators are dealing with _complexities of language_: "cognitive context" to consider; aiming at a moving target since language usage of readers changes over time (to the uninitiated young person, coveting someone else's "ox or ass" takes on a whole new meaning!), and new understanding of words, concepts, and discourse in the start text can occur due to new understanding of cultural or literary context.

Communication Theory, Cognitive Studies, Discourse Analysis, Relevance Theory, "Son of God", "Allah", Gendered Language

DEALING WITH COMPLEXITIES OF LANGUAGE

Understanding the relationship between **words** and **meaning**: language/communication theory

- "**Cognitive context**"= the signals that go off in the brain _when the hearer hears a certain word or phrase or discourse in a particular context_ (e.g., mental pictures, feelings/emotions, associations/connections) because of prior knowledge, experiences, beliefs
- "**Contextual frames**" exist around every word and phrase (and even literary devices), both for the starting text and target text
- Wendland, Contextual Frames, Kindle locations 263 ff, 463ff

---

Understanding the relationship between **words** and **meaning**: language theory

Playing with words and meaning:
- "That's really great."
- "You're such a jerk."

- Context is everything

Understanding the relationship between **words** and **meaning**: language theory

- Consider **cognitive context** and **contextual frames** for "green" in contemporary culture

"inexperienced"

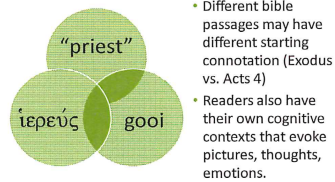## Understanding the relationship between **words** and **meaning**: language theory

- Everyday cognitive and contextual frames examples:
  - Dog= playful, loyal house pet (Grand Rapids)
  - Dog= wild street animal (Istanbul in the 80's-90's)
  - Dog= a contemptible person

  - "That's really great" = expression of joy
  - "That's really great" = expression of disappointment

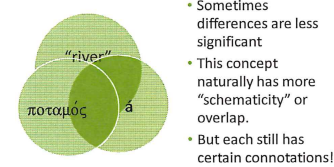| What the British say	What the British mean	What others understand
I hear what you say	I disagree and do not want to discuss it further	He accepts my point of view
With the greatest respect...	I think you are an idiot	He is listening to me
That's not bad	That's good	That's poor
That is a very brave proposal	You are insane	He thinks I have courage
Quite good	A bit disappointing	Quite good
I would suggest...	Do it or be prepared to justify yourself	Think about the idea, but do what you like
Oh, incidentally/by the way	The primary purpose of our discussion is...	That is not very important
I was a bit disappointed that	I am annoyed that	It doesn't really matter
Very interesting	That is clearly nonsense	They are impressed
I'll bear it in mind	I've forgotten it already	They will probably do it
I'm sure it's my fault	It's your fault	Why do they think it was their fault?
You must come for dinner	It's not an invitation, I'm just being polite	I will get an invitation soon
I almost agree	I don't agree at all	He's not far from agreement
I only have a few minor comments	Please re-write completely	He has found a few typos
Could we consider some other options	I don't like your idea	They have not yet decided

---

Understanding the relationship between **words** and **meaning**: language theory

- "**Contextual frames**" exist around every word and phrase (and even literary devices), both for the starting text and target text
- Bible examples:
  - **Priest**: robed, Jewish man who kills animals for sacrifices? robed, western guy at the front of the church? Animist healer in Africa? Pedophile?
  - "Blessed are **the poor in spirit**" (Wendlund)
  - **Parable** of the **Mustard** Seed

Communication theory: Translation is never 100% transfer!

- Different bible passages may have different starting connotation (Exodus vs. Acts 4)
- Readers also have their own cognitive contexts that evoke pictures, thoughts, emotions.

Translation is never 100% transfer!

- Sometimes differences are less significant
- This concept naturally has more "schematicity" or overlap.
- But each still has certain connotations!

Translation is never 100% transfer!

Cognitive linguistics example:
- The sounds "bay-bee" in English contexts =
  - Newly born human: likely the first thought and picture
  - Newly born animal: a particular context could easily make this the first picture
- The sounds "low-mee-nee" in another language =
  - Newly born human
  - Newly born animal
  - Newly sprouted plant or tree

David Tuggy, Introduction to Cognitive Grammar

Translation is never 100% transfer

- Grammatical categories don't overlap 100%

- Languages in which verbs themselves cannot indicate past time? Must add a time word/time reference.
  - "yesterday" or some other context word

- Languages without passive voice verbs? Must use an active verb that conveys it as closely as possible
  - "receive", "experience", etc.

Translation is never 100% transfer

- Languages that don't have abstract nouns, or need a subject + active verb + object, or don't have "to be" verbs?
  - "Love is patient. Love is kind…" = "People must love others with patience/patiently"

Translation is never 100% transfer

- Languages in which participles are rarely used? Must turn them into nouns/adjectives/adverbs/verbs.
- Languages which use the present tense even when it's referencing past time? Must turn it into past time.
- καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι τὰς παραβολὰς αὐτοῦ, ἔγνωσαν ὅτι περὶ αὐτῶν λέγει.

"And when the chief priests and Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he spoke about them.
  - Mt. 21:45.

Translation is never 100% transfer

- Current Issue in Bible translation: "son"

Jesus and "Son of God" translation discussions

- In some Bible translations, the language of Jesus' relationship to God the Father (e.g. "Son of God") is softened to stem confusion and anger from Muslims who mistakenly believe this means that God engaged in sexual relations with Mary. (CT devoted a 2011 cover story to the controversy.)
- This is CONTEXT issue: The contextual frames and cognitive context in these settings is being considered in the translation work

- http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2016/march/wycliffe-associates-leaves-wga-bible-translation-son-of-god.html

Jesus and "Son of God" translation discussions

- In 2012, Wycliffe USA pulled one controversial Bible translation from circulation and halted publication of several others after the 3-million-member Assemblies of God threatened to boycott the ministry over language concerns.
- The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) investigated, and in 2013 released new guidelines that translators should choose "the most suitable words in light of the semantics of the target language." For example, "qualifying words" such as "heavenly father" could be used for God and "eternal Son" for Jesus
- http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2016/march/wycliffe-associates-leaves-wga-bible-translation-son-of-god.html

Jesus and "Son of God" translation discussions

- Again…in some Bible translations, the language of Jesus' relationship to God the Father (e.g. "Son of God") is softened to stem confusion from Muslims who mistakenly believe this means that God engaged in sexual relations with Mary…because of their contextual frames.
- Why this misunderstanding? Because the word "son" or "daughter" is tied to their frame of "sperm of a man"
- Discussion: A new translation called Jesus "the Beloved Son who comes (or originates) from God."
- Is this a compromise that undermines belief in Jesus Christ as the pre-existent, only begotten Son of God?

"Allah" in translations

- Question: Should Bible translations use *Allah* to refer to God? Muslims understand *Allah* in terms of simple monotheism rather than the dynamic Trinitarian theology that Christians profess. Yet *Allah*, the word for God that Muslims know from the Qur'an, actually predates Islam.
- BUT, consider this contextual frame: Allah has been used as the Christian, Trinitarian term for God (in the Arabic Bible) for centuries
- More context: Allah is a Semitic-root word, related to Hebrew "el-", and Aramaic "Eloi"

- One more example
I Cor. 7:1. The idiom "touching a woman"=
    Sex?
    Casual, sometimes abusive, sex (Ciampa)
    [update: Christian Standard Bible changed their translation]

- Vice lists/sexual sins: Men in the Greco-Roman world could (and usually did) sexually exploit any slave in his household, including male slaves
- **Roy's article FOOTNOTE**

Communication Theory and Levels of Meaning

The **3 parts of the communication act:**
- Locution (sounds that are spoken/words written)
- Illocution (what is accomplished in what is said)
- Perlocution (the response evoked by what is said)

There's a shared context (a shared cognitive environment) that is assumed in communication.

Bible writers: they did not say absolutely everything they meant, but guessed their audience's background knowledge and wrote only enough to convey some thoughts as well as stimulate in the audience some information they thought the audience already possessed.

Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 32-35, 127-128

Relevance Theory

- Cognitive theory of "inference" along with "efficiency"
- R.T. acknowledges that communication is **inferential.**
    - *Meaning is inferred* from **experience** and **context**
    - R.T. highlights that **listeners of utterances have to work out the levels of meaning.**

- So how much of the original context do you add into a translation?

    - Pattemore, "Framing Nida," 241.

Relevance Theory, Meaning, and Context

- English examples:
    - "Is it time for your medication? Or mine?"
    - British English chart

- Bible example:
    - Harriet Hill: Adioukrou readers were unable to grasp the significance of the footwashing—the utter shock of the disciples at this act—**until they were given the contextual information** about how even Jewish slaves would consider this job beneath them.
    - Original readers had enough context.
    - Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads,* 164-165

Relevance Theory, Meaning, and Context

- The translation debate:
    - Leave vagueness in the text
    - Leave vagueness in the text, and maybe add explanatory footnote
    - Make the text itself more specific or detailed so that it makes sense to the new audience...with the risk that it may actually be "off" on the original intent or setting OR with the risk of making the text so wordy it ceases to be meaningful

Relevance Theory, Meaning, and Context

- "'Hebraisms' represent a phenomenon perfectly familiar to linguists, that of 'calque,' where a translated word or phrase reproduces in the target language the form and structure of its equivalent in the source language."
- "To take a notable example, the Greek *eirene* takes on the senses of Hebrew shalom, and thus can 'mean' also 'prosperity,' 'health,' 'welfare,' or even 'news about.'"

- Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 128.

Discussion

- How would you evaluate Bible translators' options RE conveying the original context to the current audience?
  - In the text itself
  - In a footnote
  - In para-text sources, including those for illiterate people
  - Leave it to teachers, leaders

Example of Tyndale

- Tyndale got in trouble with his translation
  - *Ekklesia*= "church"? Or "congregation"?
  - "On this Rock I will build my *ekklesia*"
    - Church? Cognitive context includes: institution, pope, bishops, hierarchy
    - Congregation? Cognitive context includes gathered people, worshipers, people of God, believers

  - **FOOTNOTE**

An additional complexity/layer

Current language usage and word meaning is a **moving target.** "Cognitive contexts" of words *change over time.* Examples:
- "charity"
- "gay"
- "ass"
- "know"
- "God is pitiful"
- "awesome"
- "salty"
- "fierce"
- "sand"

Shifting of cognitive contexts

What is the contextual frame or cognitive context for the average American in 2016 who hears the English word "**charity**"?

- A female name?

- A non-profit agency?

- Covenant love?
  - "Charity suffereth long" (KJV)
  - "Love is patient." (NIV)

Conclusion on Cognitive Context and Relevance Theory

- Education helps us all with the cognitive context of the Bible
- Translators have to look at pros and cons, gains and losses of the multiple choices for the text, for explanatory footnotes, for paratext materials, always keeping the "skopos" and translation brief in mind.
- Avoiding harsh, judgmental, pejorative descriptors of various translations

235

An example: Gendered language

- Changing language usage
- Therefore, changing cognitive contexts
- Ideology issues? (More on that later.)

Gendered language issues in Bible translation

Example: The use of gender-neutral language.

In all the following translations: NRSV, NIV, TNIV, NET, NLT, GoodNewsT, New Cent V...., etc...
"anyone" or "they" has replaced "he"
"brothers and sisters" has replaced "brothers"
"mankind", "humanity," "people", has often replaced "man"

Gendered language in translation

τις (masculine/feminine 3rd d.)
ἀνθρωπος, ὁ
αὐτοι .. αὐτῶν
οὖτοι

The Greek words.

---

2 Corinthians 5:17

Greek:

" ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά."

New American Standard Bible

- Therefore if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

---

2 Corinthians 5:17

King James Version

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

New International Version

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

---

2 Corinthians 5:17

English Standard Version

- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

New Living Translation

- This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

Gendered language in translation

- ἄνθρωπος: happens to be a masculine noun, but it means "human"
- Masculine pronouns are ALWAYS used to refer to mixed-gender groups in both Hebrew and Greek (and MANY other languages.)
- Masculine nouns and pronouns are almost always used for hypothetical situations (whether singular or plural), intended for any human.

Gendered language in translation

Examples:

ἀδελφος, ὁ

Argument: "*It's one word in Greek, so it needs to stay one word in English.*"

"Brothers" vs. "Brothers and sisters"

Gendered language in translation

Example:

"Brothers and sisters"

ἀδελφ–=sibling (in BDAG, the standard Greek dictionary)

Gendered language in translation

- "Accuracy" as a goal= best representation possible of the text language into the best representation of the target language.

- This takes intense study *of language USAGE in the target language.*

- "Between 1990 and 2009, instances of masculine generic pronouns and determiners, expressed as a percentage of total generic pronoun usage in general written English, fell from 22% to 8%.
- Instances of plural/neutral generic pronouns and determiners rose from 65% to 84%.
- e.g. 'If you can identify an **individual** who metabolizes nicotine faster you can treat **them** more effectively.'"
- FOOTNOTE?!

Gendered language in translation

Some questions:
- In the original context, did the Greek word ἀδελφοι "cover" or give the cognitive context for both genders?
- In standard English usage in 2016, does the English word "brothers" give the cognitive context for both genders?

Gendered language in translation

- Are there any subcultures where the English word "brothers" is inclusive to both genders in meaning?
- In traditional African-American churches, what is the cognitive context of the term "brothers"?

Gendered language issues in translation

- How does the "word-for-word" / "one-for-one" option affect understanding?
- See handout from Mark Strauss on the ESV

Textlinguistics, Discourse analysis

COMPLEXITIES OF LANGUAGE, CONT.

Discourse analysis

- Your work over the last year!
- Advances in understanding about and from discourse analysis can affect meaning and translation
- Levinsohn, Runge, Campbell
- Background/foreground, cohesion, word order, aspect, markedness, word order, etc.
- Genre and author considerations

Coherence, cohesion, word order; Continuity, discontinuity;

- Key ideas in discourse analysis
- (Some review here.)
- Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*

Coherence

- Idea in communication theory that the speaker/writer will share enough in common with the listeners/hearers so that the communication makes sense.
- We see the biblical books as coherent. Of course, there are cultural barriers, especially to a modern reader, because of time and geography, but they would have been coherent (to some degree) to the original audience.
- Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*

Cohesion

- Connections within the bigger discourse (or to other texts) that help it make sense to the reader/listener
  - Letter formulas (See handouts from earlier in the semester)
    - E.g. opening greeting
  - Repetition of people, words, grammar forms that show sentence connections, paragraph connections, book connections (See handouts from earlier in the semester)
    - 1st person plural verbs in **Colossians 1**
    - Note that an articular noun typically implies that its referent is already to be found in the mental model that the reader has formed from previous verses. God in verse 3.

More on word order

- Preverbal focus or "pre-posing"
- **James 1:2**
- **James 2:18**

- Conclusion: CHOICE IMPLIES MEANING
  - Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, viii

"Discontinuities"

- Discontinuities are elements in the text that show some sort of change is occurring in the text
  - Change of location (discontinuity of place; narratives)
  - Change of characters (discontinuity of participants)
  - Change of event (discontinuity of action)
  - Change through time gaps (discontinuity of time; narratives)

  - Example: "δε" is often used to alert the reader to discontinuity; it connects to the previous, but goes in a new direction

Markedness; Prominence

- (or "emphasis," but many linguists like to save the word "emphasis" for emotional expressiveness)
- Any device that gives certain events, participants, or objects more significance than others.
- Example: aspect of certain tenses: imperfect, perfect
  - Campbell
- Example: word order
- Cautions
- Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 174-175

Word order to show prominence/emphasis

- In narratives:
  - Verb-subject object is #1
  - Subject-verb-object is #2
- In letters
  - Subject-verb-object is #1
  - Verb-subject-object is #2

  - Why the switch-up from narratives? Because discontinuities in propositional writing or "argument" writing are made by putting the noun before the verb. So the writer will offer a new piece of logic, and let the reader know that, by putting the noun before the verb. Example: **James 1:3-4a**

Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 37

Word order to show prominence/emphasis

- So the writer will offer a new piece of logic , and let the reader know that by putting the noun before the verb. Example: James 1:3-4a.

- Note: nouns are first
- Note: NO definite article in front of "endurance" in 3b

Why study complexities of communication?

- So many options!
- Flexibility of the text
- Helps us see why translations need to be updated

- Oral performance of the Bible
- Visual Bibles:
  - Video performance of the Bible
  - Animated Bible
  - Anime Bible

An important final consideration:

IDEOLOGY AND TRANSLATION

A final issue: **Ideology** and translation

- **Ideology affects translation;** translation can also affect ideology.
- "Ideology"= a thought world generated by and supportive of a particular power agenda...usually only visible to those excluded from the power system.
  (Sandra Schneider)
- Missions history= ugly
- Doctrinal bias?

A final issue: ideology and translation

- Translators have power because translations have power
- Cultural bias is inevitable
- Examples:
  - For Tyndale: the HUGE debate was his using the English word "congregation" instead of "church!"
    - Spanish halted the printed of Bibles in the vernacular over the same issue
  - Today: resistance to "Allah" for God

- Ellingworth, *From Martin Luther*, 109
- R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism*, 164

A final issue: **Ideology** and translation

- "Ideology"= conscious and unconscious loyalties influenced by my cognitive mapping of the world...
  (Roy Ciampa)
- We tend to be blind to our own "maps." Our cognitive mapping of the world is automatic because of experiences, education, etc.
- Roy Ciampa: "Ideological Challenges"

A final issue: ideology and translation

- Another example of using power and bias:
  - From Tyndale: he translated "idolater" as "worshippers of images" because of his disapproval of medieval customs
  - ESV and gendered language: p. 21 in Strauss handout; example: Romans 12:1
    - Gendered language: capitulation to culture? Or could it be that NOT using it is capitulation to the ideology of a certain segment of the church?

Romans 12:1

- Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, παραστῆσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ, τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν·

- Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. (NIV)

- I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (ESV)
  - Interestingly, the footnote basically says, "This means brothers and sisters." Admitting that they didn't end up putting the best interpretation and intention of the authors into the text?

Discussion

- Question: Do we interpret the Bible operating on the notion of "direct transferability" which is "the idea that readers of Bible translations should feel that the Bible (and God, through the Bible) directly addresses them in their particular circumstances"?
- pp. Roy Ciampa: "Ideological Challenges" 141-145

Identity mapping and direct transferability

- Problem: We impose our own cognitive map onto the text, and then default into direct transfer.
- Examples:
- "The Jews," especially in John's Gospel
- "Husbands and wives"
- "Priests"
- "elder," "presbyter" (πρεσβύτερος)
- "bishop," "overseer" (ἐπίσκοπος)
- "deacon," "servant" (διάκονος)
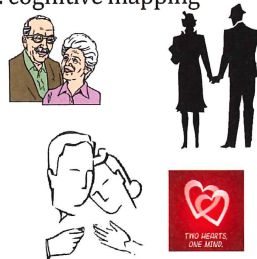- "shepherd," "Pastor" (ποιμήος)
- "preaching," "proclaiming" (κηρύσσων)
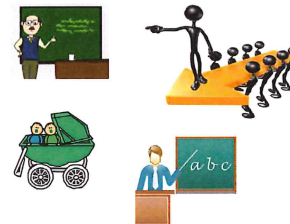
Identity mapping and "the Jews"

"the Jews" in John

Husbands and wives: 21st century N.A. cognitive mapping

Husbands and wives: 1st century Greco-Roman cognitive mapping

241

Identity mapping issues

- The remedy?
- Could add footnotes that address identity mapping
  - Bibles already have notes on text issues, alternative translations, or references to obvious foreign elements.
- "Footnotes" in the church setting?
  - Teaching times
  - Bible study times
  - Sermons? Possibly. Always with care.

Final thoughts for life-long learning on translation issues

- Stay in tune to which Bible versions the members of your congregation are reading.
- Use multiple translations for devotions, for study, and when interacting with others in pastoral situations. (see handout)
- Address translation issues when they come up...with pastoral care.
  - Remember *skopos*! Don't resort to simplistic descriptions of translations like "bad" or "good."

Final thoughts on translation

- "Translation is never 100% transfer."
- Translation is always an interpretation.
- In every translation..."something is lost, but something else is gained," Fee and Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation* (Kindle location 861).

Bibliography

Adam, A. K. M., Stephen Fowl, Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Francis Watson. *Reading Scripture with the Church: Toward a Hermeneutic for Theological Interpretation.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

"An Evaluation of Gender Language in the 2011 Edition of the NIV Bible." *CBMW*. June 6, 2011. Accessed September 30, 2016. http://www.bibleresearcher.com/cbmw.niv2011.2.pdf

Arduini, Stefano. "Translation." Accessed through Sakai, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Barrick, Audrey. "Lutherans Latest to Reject New NIV Bible Over Gender Language." *The Christian Post*, September 4, 2012. Accessed October 3, 2016. http://www.christianpost.com/news/lutherans-latest-to-reject-new-niv-bible-over-gender-language-81060/

Bassnett, Susan. *Translation Studies*. London; New York: Routledge, 2002.

Bauman, Ann and Paul Bremer. *Kuyper College: Celebrating 75 Years of Service, By God's Grace, For His Glory.* Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Company Publishers, 2014.

Bevans, Stephen B. *Models of Contextual Theology.* Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1992.

Bird, Michael F. *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

Bock, Darrell L. *Jesus According to Scripture: Restoring the Portrait from the Gospels.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1990.

Bock, Darrell L., and Buist M. Fanning, eds. *Interpreting the New Testament Text: Introduction to the Art and Science of Exegesis*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2006.

Brown, Jeannine K. *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

Brunn, Dave. *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013.

Burke, David. "The First Versions: The Septuagint, the Targums, and the Latin." In *A History of Bible Translation*, edited by Philip A. Noss, 59-89. Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007.

Campbell, Constantine R. *Basics of Verbal Aspect in Biblical Greek.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008.

Ciampa, Roy E. "Contemporary Approaches to Bible Translation: Origins, Characteristics, and Issues." *A Bíblia e Suas Edições em Língua Portuguesa: 200º Aniversário da Primeira Edição Bíblica em Português da Sociedade Bíblica/ 1809-2009.* Lusófona Magazine of Science of Religions Monographic Series, 6. Lisbon: University Editions Lusófonas & Sociedade Bíblica, (2010): 59-101.

—. "Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators," *International Journal of Frontier Missiology,* 28 no. 3 (2011): 139-148.

—. "The Terms of Translation: Ideological Challenges for Bible Translators." *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 28, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 139-148.

Currid, John D. *Against the Gods: The Polemical Theology of the Old Testament.* Wheaton: Crossway, 2013.

DeYoung, Kevin. *Taking God at his Word.* Wheaton: Crossway, 2014.

de Vries, Lourens. "Translation as Culture." Accessed through Sakai, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Esala, Nathan. "Implementing Skopostheorie in Bible Translation." *The Bible Translator* 64, no. 3 (2013): 300-323.

Ellingworth, Paul. "From Martin Luther to the Revised English Version." In *A History of Bible Translation*, edited by Philip A. Noss, 105-140. Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007.

Fee, Gordon D., and Mark L. Strauss. *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth.* 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.

Fensham, F. Charles. *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah,* New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.

Ferdman, Roberto A. "Americans Are Beginning To Lose Their Love For Foreign Languages." *The Washington Post,* February 19, 2015. Accessed September 30, 2016. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/02/19/american s-are-beginning-to-lose-their-love-for-foreign-languages

Fuller, David Otis. *Which Bible?* Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International
Publications, 1975.

Frame, John. *The Doctrine of the Word of God.* Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2010

Gentzler, Edwin. *Contemporary Translation Theories*. 2nd ed. Clevendon: Multilingual
Matters, 2001.

Gronsmann, Cathy Lynn. "Bible Changes Leads To A Holy War Of Words." *USA Today*,
March 27, 2002. Accessed October 8, 2016.
http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/science/2002-03-27-bible-changes.html.

Grudem, Wayne. "NIV Controversy: Participants Sign Landmark Agreement." *CBMW
News*, June, 1997. Accessed September 16, 2016. http://cbmw.org/wp-
content/uploads/2013/05/2-3.pdf

Gutt, Ernst-August. *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context.* Manchester:
St. Jerome, 2000.

Hanson, Collin. "The Problem 'Son': Debate Continues Over Translating 'Son of God'
for Muslims." *Christianity Today*, April 3, 2012. Accessed September 16, 2016.
http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/april/problem-son.html.

—. "The Son and the Crescent." *Christianity Today,* 55 no. 2 (2011).

Haynes, Stephen R., and Steven L. McKenzie. *To Each Its Own Meaning: An
Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Applications.* Louisville:
Westminster John Knox, 1999.

Hill, Harriet. *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads: From Translation to Communication.*
Manchester: St. Jerome, 2006.

Jessup, Meredith. "New Politically Correct Bible Translation Causes Stir With
Conservative Christians." *The Blaze*, March 18, 2011. Accessed June 15, 2016.
http://www.theblaze.com/stories/2011/03/18/new-politically-correct-bible-
translation-causes-stir-with-conservative-christians/.

Jobes, Karen, and Moises Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint.* Grand Rapids: Baker
Academic, 2005.

Kostenberger, Andreas J., and David A. Croteau. *Which Bible Translation Should I
Use?* Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2012.

"Kuyper College Catalog." 2016-2017. Grand Rapids, 2016.

Law, T. M. *When God Spoke Greek: The Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013.

LeBlanc, Doug. "Hands Off My NIV!" *Christianity Today* 41, no.7 (1997): 52-53.

Lee, John A. L. "The Present State of Greek Lexicography" in Biblical Greek Language and Lexicography. Edited by Bernard A. Taylor, John A. L. Lee, R. Burton Peter and Richard E. Whitaker, 66-74. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Levinsohn, Stephen H. *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek.* 2nd Edition. Dallas: SIL International, 2000.

Meehan, Chris. "NIV Translator Speaks of Finding The Right Words." *CRCNA.* October 13, 2015. Accessed October 3, 2016. https://www.crcna.org/news-and-views/niv-translator-speaks-finding-right-words

Mitchell, Basil and Maurice Wiles. "Does Christianity Need a Revelation?" *Theology* 83, no 692 (1980): 103-114.

Mojola, Aloo Osotsi, and Ernst Wendland. "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies," In *Bible Translation: Frames of References,* edited by Timothy Wilt, 1-25. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2002.

Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications.* 3rd edition. London: Routledge, 2012.

Neff, David. "Meaning-full Translations." *Christianity Today* 46 no. 11 (2002).

—. "The Great Translation Debate: The divides over gender-inclusive Bibles hides what unites us." *Christianity Today* 41, no.12 (1997).

Nida, Eugene A., and Charles R. Taber. *The Theory and Practice of Translation.* Brill, 1982.

Nord, Christiane. *Translating As a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained.* Manchester: St. Jerome, 2001.

Noss, Philip A., ed. "History of Bible Translation: Introduction and Overview," In *A History of Bible Translation, 1-28.* Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007.

Olasky, Susan. "Femme Fatale." *World*, March 29, 1997. Accessed September 16, 2016. https://world.wng.org/1997/03/femme_fatale.

Pattemore, Stephen. "Framing Nida." In *A History of Bible Translation,* edited by Philip A. Noss, 217-263. Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007.

Peterson, Eugene H. *The Message: the Bible in Contemporary Language*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002.

Porter, Stanley E. *Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015.

Portier-Young, Anathea. "Languages of Identity and Obligation." *Vetus Testamentum* 60, no. 1 (2010): 98-115.

Poythress, Vern S. and Mark Strauss. "The TNIV Debate." *Christianity Today* 46 no. 11 (2002): 37-45.

Pym, Anthony. *Exploring Translation Theories*. London: Routledge, 2009.

Reformed Ecumenical Synod. *Acts of the Fourth Reformed Ecumenical Synod of Potchefstroom South Africa: August 6-13 1958.* Synod,1958

Rajak, Tessa. *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Robinson, Francis, ed. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World.* Cambridge Illustrated Histories. Grand Rapids, MI: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Sandy, Brent D., and John Walton. *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014.

Silva, Moises. "Using and Abusing Language," in *Rightly Divided, Readings in Biblical Hermeneutics*. Edited by Roy B. Zuck, 85-101. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996.

Smietana, Bob. "Major Provider Won't Stop Selling Controversial Bible." *USA Today*, February 17, 2012. Accessed October 11, 2016. https://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/religion/story/2012-02-17/controversial-niv-bible-lifeway/53131628/1

Soesilo, Daud. "Bible Translation in Asia-Pacific and the Americas." In *A History of Bible Translation*, edited by Philip A. Noss, 163-184 Rome: Edizioni de storia e letteratura, 2007.

Soukup, Paul A. "Understanding Audience Understanding." In *From One Medium to Another: Communicating the Bible through Multimedia*, edited by Paul A. Soukup and Robert Hodgson, 91-108. Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1997.

Soukup, Paul A., and Robert Hodgson, eds. *From One Medium to Another: Communicating the Bible through Multimedia*. Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1997.

Southern Baptist Convention. "Can I Still Trust My Bible?" Advertisement. *Christianity Today*. 41, no.12 (1997): 14-15.

Steffan, Melissa. "Wycliffe No Longer Faces Boycott by 12,700 Churches." *Christianity Today*, June 13, 2013. Accessed September 16, 2016. http://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2013/june/wycliffe-no-longer-faces-boycott-by-12700-churches.html

Strauss, Mark L. *Distorting Scripture? The Challenge of Bible Translation and Gender Accuracy*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishing, 1998.

Strode, Tom. "SBC tackles immigration, NIV." *Baptist Press*, June 16, 2011. Accessed September 16, 2016. http://www.bpnews.net/35565/resolutions-sbc-tackles-immigration-niv

Sugirtharajah, R.S. *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Thompson, John Lee. *Reading the Bible with the Dead: What You Can Learn from the History of Exegesis That You Can't Learn from Exegesis Alone*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

Tuggy, David. "Introduction to Cognitive Grammar." Accessed August 5, 2014. http://www.sil.org/~tuggyd/PowerPoints/powerpoints_english.htm

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge.* Landmarks in Christian Scholarship. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.

——. *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion, and Authorship*. Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Waltke, Bruce K. "Textual Criticism of the Old Testament and Its Relation to Exegesis and Theology," in *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: The Introductory Articles from the New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis.* Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren, 48-65. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

Walton, John H. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Walton, John H, and D. Brent Sandy. *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013.

Weber, Jeremy. "Stop Supporting Wycliffe's Current Bible Translations for Muslims, PCA Advises Churches." *Christianity Today*. June 22, 2012. Accessed September 16, 2016. http://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2012/june/stop-supporting-wycliffes-current-bible-translations-for.html

Wegner, Paul D. *The Journey from Texts to Translations.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

—. *From Text to Translation: The origin and development of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

Wendland, Ernst. *Contextual Frames of Reference in Translation- Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

—. *Contextual Frames of Reference in Translation: A Coursebook for Bible Translators and Teachers*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

White, James R. *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust the Modern Translations?* 2nd ed. Bloomington: Bethany House Publishers, 2009.

Wilson, Robert. "Foreign Words in the Old Testament as Evidence of Historicity." *Princeton Theological Review* 26, no. 2 (1928): 177-247.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections On the Claim That God Speaks.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Zwemer, Samuel. "Translations of the Koran." *Moslem World* (1915): 244-61.

Zylstra, Sarah Eekhoff. "The Most Popular and Fastest Growing Bible Translation Isn't What You Think It Is." *Christianity Today*. March 3, 2014. Accessed September 30, 2016. http://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2014/march/most-popular-and-fastest-growing-bible-translation-niv-kjv.html

VITA

Lisa was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on March 6, 1967. She is married to Mike and they have three grown children: Sara (married to Josh), Joshua (married to Melissa), and Elisabeth. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Calvin College in Grand Rapids (1989) as well as a Masters of Theological Studies degree with a concentration in Old Testament from Calvin Theological Seminary (2007). Lisa worked on her Doctor of Ministry degree in Bible Translation from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary from 2013 to 2017.

From 1992 to 1998, Lisa lived in Istanbul, Turkey and was involved in arranging and co-leading intercultural immersion experiences for college students. She is currently Associate Professor of Intercultural and Biblical Studies at Kuyper College in Grand Rapids, Michigan where she teaches New Testament Greek as well as an immersion course on Islam that brings students in direct contact with Muslims living in Grand Rapids and Dearborn areas. She has served on a committee to assess Bible translations for the Christian Reformed Church, and also currently teaches Greek part-time at Calvin Theological Seminary, the official seminary of the CRC.